

child study

The journal of parent education

Mass media—their impact on
children and family life
in our culture

1960 CSAA Annual Conference Report

Selma H. Fraiberg • Edgar Z. Friedenberg • Eric Johnston
Frederick B. Rainsberry • Otto Klineberg, M.D.
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A quarterly journal of parent education

Summer 1960

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Announcement

With this issue, the Board of Directors of the Child Study Association of America announces the suspension of CHILD STUDY magazine, and the launching this Fall of a much broader program of pamphlet, leaflet and book publishing.

With this vital reorganization of our publications program, including the addition of new materials, the Association will add scope to its coverage of special problem areas, and depth to its reporting and interpretation of significant new concepts and research findings.

The Publications Department will continue to serve the interests and needs of parents and the growing number of professions concerned with bettering parent-child relationships.

Subscribers to CHILD STUDY are invited to accept, for the remainder of their subscription period, copies of the Association's new pamphlets as they come off the presses, or to apply their credit to current, listed publications. Refunds will be made upon request.

MASS MEDIA: Their Impact on Children and Family Life in Our Culture

The effect of the mass media on our thinking, our behavior, our values—indeed on our total culture—profoundly concerns us all. And surely there is no subject more likely to arouse such intensity of feeling, such diversity of views. Whether we talk about freedom versus censorship, or about the effect of comics, the preponderance of violence on TV programs, we are inevitably confronted with a bewildering variety of passionately-held opinions, contradictory assumptions and facts.

This intensity and variety measure the quality—and the depth—of our concern. Yet they may mislead us. Long before we can argue that this side is right, or another, wrong, we have a basic responsibility to explore as fully as possible our knowledge and our assumptions about the effects of the mass media on our own and our children's lives.

It is in this spirit that we present—as fully as the stern limitations of space permit—the addresses and discussion from the Child Study Association's 36th Annual Conference. It is our hope that, without offering ready, conclusive answers or easy solutions, this issue will shed new light on some of these basic questions:

- 1. Are the mass media meeting the wishes and needs of people? Who defines or should define these needs?*
- 2. How much is known about the effects on children of "good" or "bad" books, movies and TV programs? How do we determine the criteria for "good" and "bad"?*
- 3. Is the "most wanted" necessarily the most desirable? If the audience, including children, seems to want themes of violence, or "Grade B" entertainment, is it wrong to let them have these? If so, are censorship, suppression, parental control alternatives?*
- 4. To what extent are we as adults influenced by the patterns of living and personal attitudes which are presented to us by the mass media? How do we relate these standards to our values and convictions?*
- 5. What is the parent's role in helping children make choices and develop values out of what they read, see or hear?*
- 6. What is being done, and what more can be done, to utilize the rich resources of the mass media for the greatest benefit to our children and to family life in our time?*

A. D. BUCHMUELLER
Executive Director, CSAA

The mass media: new schoolhouse for children

TV, movies and the comics compete with
home and school for the education of our children.
How can parents meet this challenge?

Many, many years ago when I was a child—in the time of the dinosaurs and Abraham Lincoln and the Pilgrim Fathers—a home was a shelter against the dangers outside. I had heard, as a child, that there was savagery in the world, that men committed murder, that homes were burglarized, that a child had been kidnapped and ravished and that in far-off lands there were revolutions and wars. But all these things happened in another world. Murderers, kidnappers and burglars lived on another planet—not so far away as dragons, witches and monsters, but almost as far—and in any case they had not much more reality for me than the creatures of the fairy tales. I saw a few movies when I was a child, carefully selected so as not to bruise a child's sensitive nature. I was a ripe age for a child before I saw a murder or horror film, and in those days the industry that has since perfected the drama of violence was still in its infancy, just cutting its fangs on such things as *Fu Manchu* and *Dracula*.

There were threats of war in my childhood in the twenties, just as there are now. And once, during such a scare, we children read the headlines and were terrified. We were not afraid that we would be killed; children in the twenties were still operating

under the old rules of warfare. We were afraid, of course, that our father might be killed. We could hardly bring ourselves to tell our parents what we feared. And then, when bed-time came and we couldn't sleep and we were exhausted by our unspent emotion, we blurted out our fears to our parents. And what do you think they said to us? It lifted our spirits and sent us off to dreamless sleep. They said, "Don't worry. There's nothing to be afraid of. There will never be another war." Did they mean it? Did they believe it? Of course they did.

The world in which I lived was undeniably a different world from that of my mother's and my grandmother's, and yet my upbringing was not so different from theirs. In my family and many thousands of others, the laws governing childish lying, stubbornness, greediness, talking back to elders and quarreling with siblings were transmitted cleanly down the line of three

*Mrs. Fraiberg, Associate Professor of Social Casework at Tulane University's School of Social Work, has spent most of her professional career in the field of psychotherapy with children. Her book, *The Magic Years*, received CSAA's first annual award for an outstanding book for parents this year. She has published widely in professional and popular journals.*

generations with serene confidence on the part of the child rearers and without serious challenge from the young—who were under the impression that laws governing family manners were written into the American Constitution. All this seems incredible to me now, for I cannot imagine how a child today could be governed so completely by his family code and insulated to such a degree from external and hostile forces.

The crack in the family fortress

At this point I will not go into the question of how much shelter a child needs for healthy growth. I only wish to point out that it was *possible* thirty years ago for parents to protect their children from influences which they felt to be alien to their educational purposes and that there were few competing agencies for the control and influence of a child's imagination and conduct.

For today's child, a home is no longer a shelter against the dangers outside. The child is a fascinated spectator of the whole of our world. From the earliest years he can control a switch that causes the window blind to fly up and reveal the most ordinary and extraordinary aspects of this world in a continuous parade before his eyes.

It is a parade of exhorting statesmen, gloomy commentators and ladies praising floor-wax; of cowboys and nasal sheriffs and district attorneys and Neanderthal gunmen; of the story-hour lady with fruity voice and the monster decanted from a madman's laboratory; of Mozart selling 1960 station wagons and station wagons selling Mozart; of hopped-up comedians fading out in a riot of canned laughter.

The child will hear his President, his congressmen and atomic physicists speak man-to-man with him about the perils of the world. He may watch the brotherhood of nations to see how older and wiser minds are at work on the problems that imperil him. He may finally escape from the wisdom of his elders to the diversion of ghouls or interplanetary monsters.

The average nine-year-old today has experienced the best and the worst of our world, and we can only hope that he is in favor of letting it go on. It is true that he is far better informed on world affairs and scientific developments than the children of my generation. And it's also true that he has a lot more to worry about. We can hope that this precocious knowledge will bring him political wisdom when he receives our legacy in twelve years.

He is precocious about lots of other things, too. He has a wider knowledge of the habits and customs of the underworld than the average sociologist in my time. His knowledge of sordid domestic intimacies and intrigues is nearly equal to that of a child reared in a slum. He has witnessed domestic brawling on his television screen; he is wise about love and unfaithfulness and divorce and psychiatrists and mental hospitals and alcoholism and dope. He can witness three or four murders on the television screen before his 8:30 bedtime and double the number when the sitter is there on parents' night out. On Saturday afternoons, when he is in the mood for a change of pace, the local movie house will provide a carefully selected children's program featuring exotic forms of torture, vampires and monsters from outer space.

The ubiquitous new educators

We are obliged to reckon with the mass media as a potent educational force in our society, and I use "educational" in the neutral sense, not necessarily as elevating but as capable of influencing ideas and emotions. The scale of this education is so vast that the primary institutions of education in our society, the home and the school, must struggle to compete. Our scientific measurement of the influence of mass media is fragmentary and inconclusive. We can only guess at the magnitude of this influence through consumer studies in those areas where media are employed to educate a consumer's appetite or to create a new market. Here the crude test of buying and consumption may be applied to measure

the educational means and, at least in this measurable area, we have amassed a mountain of data which testify to the efficacy and potency of education through mass media.

If the subject of the influence of mass media on today's children has brought all of us together today, it is because we recognize the power of these new educational forces that go their own way unhampered by tradition or the social obligations of families and schools and frequently indifferent to the values that we hold for our children.

The prerogative of a parent to exclude unwelcome educational influences is not easily exercised in the home today. At least one of these ubiquitous educators, the television set, has planted itself securely in the family living room, a permanent boarder, often loud-mouthed, garrulous, uncouth and boring. Everyone fears that the Boarder is having a bad influence upon the children, but it is difficult to silence him and difficult to exclude him. He can be animated and given voice by any child over twelve months of age capable of turning a switch, and he can be silenced only by tirelessly vigilant parents. He could be excluded on grounds of corrupting the young, but sometimes he redeems himself after the children go to bed by a creditable performance of music or drama. "So you see," the parents say to each other, "if we got rid of the Boarder we would miss some Very Fine Programs."

Violence in a post-war world

The appetite for violence which so disturbs us in our children has been given strong nourishment and encouragement by mass media, but we cannot examine the influence of horror and crime programs without reference to the climate of our culture. It is not only through mass media that violence is transmitted in our culture. Violence is in the air and we are all affected by it.

After every war, the aggression that had been liberated for survival and had its legitimate target in the enemy, returns with the soldier to be subdued once again. But

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something remains, and without the sanctions of war and a target, it discharges itself in the cultural atmosphere—an aimless, free-floating aggression that roams the streets looking for something to do. The social institutions that normally reinforce the prohibitions against aggression have themselves been crippled by war. This means, of course, that an increase in acts of violence is a regular occurrence following war. And even when violence is not discharged through acts, it fills the imagination and makes itself felt in the culture. We should not forget that neither World War II nor the Korean War was concluded with a return to peace-time, and the threat of atomic warfare has never left us in fifteen years.

Collective daydreams

It is not easy to see the effects of omnipresent danger in our society. Certainly we behave as if the danger were not there. But if we want to know a society's state of mind, we should examine not only the external signs, but the myths and daydreams of that society. If a society faces the danger of extinction with a passive face, this tells us nothing in itself. But if that society is also addicted to collective daydreams of violence in which life is threatened by inhuman gangsters or monsters bent on world destruction, we must treat the daydream as the other side of the passive exterior. While it is true that fantasies of world destruction are as old as the race, when such fantasies take the form of a community daydream they tell us that the community is reacting inwardly to the great peril, that it recognizes the danger in fantasy while it ignores it in reality.

It would be folly to blame the vulgar crime shows of television for the disease that affects us and our children. We are united in these morbid daydreams of violence and horror, and their vulgarity should not hide from us the primitive fear that has made violence one of the forms of family entertainment.

For aggression must also be seen as a primitive defense against danger. It is reg-

ularly brought into service during wartime and doubtless has insured survival of men in battle and of whole communities and nations in times past. Today, when the threat of extinction hangs over the whole human community, this preoccupation with violence may be seen as a reactivation of this archaic mode of defense.

Every child who has grown up during the past fifteen years has been confronted with a fact that no other child in the lifetime of the human family has had to face. He has known from early childhood that a weapon exists that can destroy him and his family and everyone and everything that constitutes his world, and there is no defense against this weapon and no possible flight from it; that it can be launched by an unseen enemy thousands of miles away or set off as a madman's caprice by a man at a control button. This is terrible knowledge for a child to own and there is something that is even more terrible in this for a child. Almost as soon as he acquires this knowledge, he will learn that his parents themselves are helpless against this danger, that they have no defense against the danger and no means of protecting him.

A primitive defense

Now we know that in the ordinary course of child development, a child masters his fears in certain typical ways. First and foremost, he relies upon his parents to protect him at times of extreme danger and he endows them with magical properties in overcoming dangerous enemies or dealing with threats from the external world. Second, he relies upon his own reality testing to deal with many of these external dangers. A witch isn't real; monsters are only pretend. But now what happens to a child when reality confirms his most terrible fears, when the danger of total annihilation is uttered daily in the press, on the radio and television and in the classroom?

When the worst fears of a child can be confirmed in reality, the child loses his own best means of dealing with external danger. And when he discovers simultaneously that

his parents themselves are helpless against such a danger, he is left without defense and without an ally against extreme peril. None of us can imagine what it is like to be a child today, to be helpless against the most extreme dangers and to be confronted in his own living room, in his classroom, with the full knowledge of the real dangers that exist in our world.

The child who occupies himself with fantasies of destruction, his own fantasies or the packaged daydreams of the screen, is a child who is attempting to master danger by means of a primitive defense. The aggressive fantasies give the child the illusion of being active, of fighting against the very dangers that make him feel helpless.

Aggression and the social goal

But now we come to the most complex part of the problem. We can understand to some measure the psychological forces at work here, but we are educators of children, and an educator cannot be content with an understanding of motive. He must ask, "How does all this affect a child's development, and how will this promote or retard our educational objectives for the child and the larger social goals that always determine child-rearing? If a child is reacting to the stress and dangers of these times by an increased pleasure in violence, will this serve his mental well-being, and will a child reared on this basis be equipped to deal with the problems of his society?"

We have learned through painful social experiments that a child's mental well-being depends in large measure on his control of aggressive urges and the employment of the energy of the aggressive drive for a vast range of mental activities that are far removed from the original mode and aims of the drives. We discovered through the period of licensed aggression of children from which our society has recently emerged, that children who were permitted free discharge of aggressive impulses were made as anxious in their own way as the severely inhibited child of another era. The child who was not required to control his aggression

showed us that he was afraid of himself, afraid of his dangerous impulses and their consequences, and fearful of monstrous retaliation from the outside world. We learned that the child who freely discharged his aggression whenever the impulse seized him was a child who often suffered difficulties in learning, and showed little inclination toward intellectual and creative activities. There was, of course, no motive to employ aggressive energy in sublimated forms as long as it could be freely discharged in action. All of this has caused us to take a sober view of the management of aggression in the child.

We have also learned that in normal and healthy child development, aggressive fantasies have their place and may harmlessly fill a need while the child is learning to manage his drives. But when we find that fantasies of violence and destruction fill a large part of a child's imaginary world and crowd out or exclude other varieties of imagination, we are no longer dealing with healthy adaptive tendencies but deep anxieties which the ego attempts to master through repetition as in a terror dream. Whether the child is the inventor of the morbid fantasy or makes use of the morbid fantasies of comic books or screen stories, we know that the consuming appetite for such fantasies arises from deep and pervasive anxiety and that the morbid fantasy will not cure but may, perversely, create its own appetite for more and stronger doses.

The danger in the defense

But now surely the question will be raised, "If we regard the increasing appetite for violence among children as a reaction to the tensions and real dangers which surround our children today, why shouldn't we speak of this behavior as 'adaptive' to a pathological world? If destruction threatens, isn't mobilization of aggression one of the ego's oldest measures to insure survival?"

It is true that aggression as a primitive defense against danger has served the human race for most of its history at times of

great peril. And this unleashing of aggression was "adaptive," in that it worked for survival. But all this is past. For the first time in man's history, his survival depends solely upon his humanity. His intelligence, his morality and his renunciation of destructive tendencies in his nature are the only measures he owns to meet the new future adaptively. The archaic defense of aggression and the unleashing of sadistic impulses will only bring him more rapidly to extinction.

Learning to modify aggression

I do not think anyone who attempts to see a culture whole will accuse the mass media of responsibility for today's violence, but it is not difficult to show how mass media can affect children's attitudes toward violence and brutality, and to see the effect on children of the steady diet of murder and sadism provided by mass media today.

Mass media have not created the appetite for violence; they have only discovered an appetite and expend their talents on increasing the market for it. And they have discovered that one of their steadiest and most loyal consumer groups can be found among children. They are not motivated by a desire to corrupt the young; their only motive is to build a market for a breakfast food or a soft drink.

The manufacturer of breakfast foods is understandably outraged to hear the objections of educators. He does not consider himself an educator of children. But anyone who brings a child into contact with his ideas, anyone who purports to represent the adult world and anyone who makes use of a child's imagination in any way becomes an educator of the child for all practical purposes. And if the average child spends only three hours a day before a television screen, we will have to admit that a substantial part of his education is in the hands of the manufacturer of breakfast foods, his script and ad writers.

What concerns us first of all is that certain of the educational aims of the mass media are directly opposed to the educa-

tional objectives our society holds for children. While all children manifest aggressive urges and all young children reveal pleasure in destruction and violence, we consider in our society—and in all civilized societies—that these aggressive and destructive urges must undergo a radical alteration in order for civilized values to survive. The aggressive drive and its original aims will be greatly modified in the course of a child's development so that its energy may serve useful social goals. In the civilized human being, we expect to see disgust and revulsion against sadism, the original infantile pleasure in destruction repressed and no longer discernible. This is one of the forms of repression that is absolutely necessary for the survival of human values and today, one may add, it is absolutely necessary for the survival of the human race.

Now it is also true that even those of us who have acquired a civilized reaction of revulsion to sadism will discover that the repeated exposure to scenes of violence and sadism may partially wear away the feeling of revulsion. The flooding of our sensory organs with repeated, strong doses of horror, will eventually create an armoring of the personality against the onslaught; we raise the barriers against the overwhelming stimulus until we are no longer able to react appropriately. The danger for our children is self-evident. A child whose senses are flooded daily by the sight and sounds of brutality is in danger of losing the capacity to summon revulsion against brutality.

Separating sex from brutality

There is a second indictment to be brought against the education through mass media. Along with naked brutality is the admixture of sex and brutality found in movies, TV and comic books.

Now, it may be argued that children themselves conceive of adult sexuality in sadistic terms, and this is true. But it is generally understood that it is the task of education to gradually achieve a separation of the sadistic elements from the sexual, and in fact, it is expected that a large measure

of this sexually linked sadism undergoes repression in normal childhood. The child normally gives up his sadistic conception of sexuality through sex education and reality testing. For while he cannot, of course, make direct observation, he does make the observation that since the adults he knows do not behave like sadists in the daytime, it is highly unlikely that they should be sadists at night. It is worth mentioning now that children who are reared in homes where violence and cruelty erupt in their everyday family life will have great difficulty in giving up their sadistic-sexual fantasies because reality seems to support these fantasies. But now what happens to children today who do not experience brutality in their families but are witnesses of brutality on the TV screen, at the neighborhood movie house, or in horror comics? I would consider that insofar as their own parents present good models, the children may correct their sadistic-sexual fantasies, but I am certain that this education to reality is made infinitely more difficult for even the best of parents because of the education of the screen and comic books.

Emphasis on realism

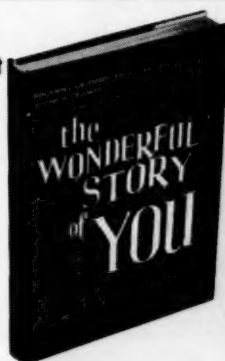
Sooner or later, in all such discussion, the rebuttal of the fairy tale is brought in. What about the monsters of fairy tales and the cruelties of witches and ogres? Is there any difference between these monsters and the vampires and bat-men who entertain today's children? There are these differences. The fairy tale world is a frankly invented world, and the child who enters it makes a pact with a storyteller to willingly suspend belief. The fairy tale keeps its side of the bargain by never representing its people or its events as real and by presenting its story in such extravagantly fantastic terms that no child above the age of two with the word "pretend" in his vocabulary should have any trouble in naming this world as "pretend."

The child reader of the fairy tale supplies his own pictures, for the most part, and is not confronted by realistic representations

of sadism and horror. The wolf who devours Little Red Riding Hood's grandmother does not emerge with bloody fangs panting for his next victim in a thirty-minute chase through the forest; he accomplishes this in one sentence in the standard version of the story: "The wolf ate up the grandmother." No sadistic lingering before the act and no lusting after the grandmother. No posturing as a human or a half-human; no pretense of being decanted in a madman's laboratory.

Apart from an over-enthusiastic approach to sadism and brutality, the movie and TV screen make a pact with their viewers which is very different from that which the fairy tale makes with its readers. If the fairy tale world is frankly unreal, the screen world attempts to make the unreal as realistic as possible, and employs all the techniques at its disposal to make the viewers feel that he is a witness, if not a participant, in the events which it represents. It is extraordinarily easy to do this with motion

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pictures. As soon as a picture is animated, it gives the illusion of reality. Even a screen presentation of a fairy tale will produce a very different effect from the story that is read. The witch in *Snow White*, who can be tolerated by most children in story form, may provoke terror in children who see the movie version. The animated picture makes the witch "real" to the child viewer.

To the child whose reality sense is not yet firmly established, the world of the screen is very close to the world of reality. If we question the young viewers, we will find that they believe that their TV heroes have a real existence some place, that when they leave the screen they pursue their vocations, eternally rounding up the bad guys, piloting ships through space, grilling arson suspects and, of course, promoting the sponsor's product. And this means, too, that when the child views the screen stories of murder, brutality and sadism, that the realistic presentation of these stories brings the child close to being an eye-witness or a participant.

I think it would not be far-fetched to propose that a large part of what a child views on the TV and movie screen is incorporated into his view of the world. We know that, throughout the early years of life, a child must construct the world of reality from his own observations. A story world and a world of the imagination can be put in their place by the young child by the time he enters school. But what does a child do with his screen world? To what extent are sadism, brutality and sordid domestic affairs built into his view of the world?

The abstraction of evil

Inevitably, too, the sponsors of these programs will rebut us with Huck Finn's alcoholic father, the vices of Mr. Fagin and his gang, Little Emily's fall from virtue and a number of other seamy characters from the classics. "Why pick on us?" they say. "What's the difference as far as the kids are concerned?" The difference, we must make clear, is not to be found in comparative vice, but in the treatment of vice. Pap Finn

had the good fortune to fall into the hands of Samuel Clemens, and while his vice is not a shade nicer than that of many a lout on a TV screen, I am in favor of introducing Pap and his delinquent son to any school-age child who cares to meet them. Huck's old man is a brute but he has psychological integrity as a character. He is, therefore, human. Unlike the brutes who emerge from the commercial arts, Pap is not an abstraction of a bad guy or a caricature of evil; he is thoroughly realized as a character and the problem of evil becomes a *human* problem in this work.

Evil is given a human connection by establishing it as a part of a character named Pap. Evil is human-centered throughout the complex development of the novel. Man's inhumanity to man is represented in the cruelty of a man to his son and again in the cruelty of the white man to the black man. When evil is represented as part of the human problem, we do not need to fear corruption of a child; it can only enlarge his humanity and give quality and depth to his moral judgments. It is the abstraction of evil in commercial fiction that corrupts.

Only the sound-effects

Writers of movie and television scripts have neither the time nor the talent to invest their characters with a personality or a significant life. Neither their lives nor their brutal deaths can have meaning for the audience; for all practical purposes the victim is a corpse before he is murdered. A child who is exposed to the monotonous repetition of death and destruction in a mindless world cannot acquire a tragic view of death, he cannot experience grief, or sorrow or outrage or even simple human bewilderment before the fact of man's inhumanity. He only learns to brace himself for the sound-effects of death.

Among other reasons, we may object to the legion of crooks who invade the family television room because they have no reason to present themselves except to give a fast jolt to the psyche and fade out. An imagination that is treated to psychic jolts

at frequent intervals may become restricted to a narrow range of emotion in which it requires strong excitement to produce pleasure. This accusation cannot be made against a literary work of merit, because if the work has merit at all, it has range and complexity. The brutality of Pap is not employed to slug the reader or to give him brief, sweet excitement; the brutality is part of the aesthetic scheme; it gives texture to a work that covers an extraordinary range of human emotion. A young reader does not know this, of course, but he experiences it as such. If he allows the novel to affect his imagination and if the work leads him into intimacy with its characters, he will know that Pap exists in the story in order to make the story and not for the purpose of titillating him.

The moral issue

If we want to consider the issue strictly on moral grounds, I would like to argue that any work that deepens a child's imagination will strengthen his moral development. Morality, in the deepest sense, derives from the possibility in a human being of entering imaginatively into many lives and many egos. It is in this sense that literature may influence moral development.

We do not want a moral education for our children that derives from cheap "lessons." If, after an orgy of sadism, the television crook is rounded up and sentenced, the producer should not feel that he has

paid his respects to civilized morality. The moral lessons of television crime fare teach that crime does not pay and the innocent will be avenged. But a stern morality needs to deal with the fact that crime often goes unpunished and virtue may go unrewarded, and the only conscience worthy of the name is one that can deal with these cruel facts and not yield an inch to the argument of gain. A stern conscience offers self-esteem as the only reward. And somewhere between the ages of three and sixteen, a child must learn to embrace this melancholy fact and find consolation in it.

We cannot single out commercial fiction in criticizing a culture that furnishes children with cheap codes of conduct. But there are few teachers as ubiquitous as that vulgar boarder in the family room, and an instrument that has demonstrated its success in influencing markets cannot be lightly dismissed as an educator of opinion, of tastes, of manners and morals.

I do not mean, by this, that the vulgar fiction of television is capable of turning our children into delinquents. The influence of such fiction on children's attitudes and conduct is really more subtle. We need to remember that it is the parents who are the progenitors of conscience and that a child who has strong ties to his parents will not overthrow their teachings more easily than he could abandon his parents themselves. I do not think any of us here needs to fear this kind of corruption of our chil-

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dren. But the effectiveness of our moral education may be substantially reduced if a child's culture does not support the teachings of parents.

The gesture of exclusion

How can we teach revulsion against sadism and the destruction of human life when the child's commercial fiction feeds the appetite for sadism and makes murder trivial? How shall we teach a child the difficult moral achievement of judging his own conduct and of becoming answerable to his own conscience when the crime story preaches its imbecile moral lessons for hours each day? The burden on the parent as moral educator becomes a very heavy one. A child who has strong ties of love will not repudiate his parents' teaching, but he will have great difficulty in summoning the emotional reactions that must accompany such attitudes when his culture makes a mockery of them. The result is not, then, a reversal of parental standards, but a blunting of moral sensibilities.

Then, too, we must reflect upon our position as moral educators when we teach our children to renounce sadism, and destructive tendencies within themselves, at the same time that we hold daily open house to the underworld of television, its gangsters, extortionists and assorted ghouls in the family living room. It has always been the prerogative of parents to exclude unwelcome influences from the home, to declare their opposition to alien and hostile forces by not keeping company with them. This is not to say that one pretended they did not exist, which is an absurd position for a parent, but to make explicit the moral stand of the family through a gesture of inhospitality or exclusion. During the years that a child must learn his parents' stand on a variety of moral issues it is undoubtedly a help to him to know which ideas are given hospitality in his home and which are not. But how is he to make sense out of an ambiguous parental stand which deplores and abhors on the one hand and permits and entertains on the other?

A firm parental policy

Inevitably we are confronted with the ugly word censorship. As an adult I am opposed to any authority that attempts to judge what I may read or hear. But I do believe strongly that parents and our society have certain rights of censorship where children are concerned. I consider this part of the protective function of all adults on behalf of children. Children need the protection of adults against their own impulses and against overwhelming dangers on the outside. I do not mean by this a hovering and over-anxious protection on the part of adults, but a protection that grows out of adult wisdom and knowledge of child development.

No child can be asked to cope with a world that assaults his eyes and ears with the sounds of death and catastrophe for hours every day. In a world where a child's education still remained in his parents' hands, we cannot imagine a parent who would choose to entertain his children with stories of crime and horror for three hours a day or more; nor can we imagine parents introducing young children to stories of sordid bedroom intimacies, violent lovers' quarrels, underworld intrigue and night club brawls. If parents, in their own education, choose to exclude certain types of experiences from the home, it is because they recognize that an immature ego cannot cope with massive excitement or omnipresent danger and needs the protective barriers provided by adults and by his home.

For these reasons I do not feel that parents need be faint-hearted about exercising their ancient prerogative of censorship on behalf of the children. We must all admit that such censorship is not easily exercised when unwelcome visitors can be admitted to the home by any child who can turn a switch, but a firm parental policy can go a long way in excluding the most objectionable programs and will go an equally long way in backing up the beliefs and standards of the home and in making the moral stand of parents explicit.

The effect of the mass media on adolescence

By Edgar Z. Friedenberg

To learn who he is, and what he really feels,
the adolescent must have truth. Can the mass media
afford to give it to him?

Any critique of the mass media must be a critique of culture itself. This means that it is futile and quite beside the point to scan the behavior of young people anxiously for signs that television is teaching them to be drug addicts, that horror movies are inducing them to become teen-age monsters, or that the school, which is surely one of the most dangerous of the mass media, is teaching them to think. Nothing could be less likely. Drug addiction, juvenile delinquency, and thought are all consequences of quite complex causes. They cannot result from suggestion or propaganda, even though the mass media may influence the form they take. The process is circular, to be sure. But we can learn more about what is happening to our youth, and for that matter to all of us, by considering the media as forceful representatives of the values and assumptions—especially unconsciously held values and assumptions—that permeate our lives than the sources of pollution or *dei ex machina* which might deliver us from evil.

Still, the mass media do impinge directly, forcefully, and almost incessantly on the most central developmental task of adolescence, and they do so in such a way as to interfere with it very seriously. The results tend to be unpleasant, though by now

they are so familiar that most of us no longer expect anything else of either the media or the adolescent.

This central development task of adolescence is self-definition. As I have stated elsewhere¹, "Adolescence is the period during which a young person learns what he is and what he really feels. It is the time during which he differentiates himself from his culture, though on the culture's terms. It is the age at which, by becoming a person in his own right, he becomes capable of deeply felt relationships to other individuals perceived clearly as such."

On life in the school, in the home, the mass media intrude. They are in the business of intrusion, and they know how to make themselves welcome. They may, and sometimes do, bring great wealth with them. They bring awareness and a certain degree of understanding of events and experiences that would otherwise be quite beyond the range of nearly all adolescents.

Dr. Friedenberg, author of "The Vanishing Adolescent," teaches adolescent development in the Department of Education, Brooklyn College, New York. Tutored at home until he entered college when he was 13, he holds an M.A. in chemistry in addition to his doctoral degree in education from the University of Chicago.

The enormous audience

But they also cause a great deal of confusion. There are certain things about the way the mass media work in our society that are fundamentally inimical to truth, competence and clarity. For an adolescent, trying to define himself, to learn who he is, what he can do, and what his real feelings are, truth and clarity can be dispensed with about as safely as food and air – but not quite as safely, because somebody does notice sooner or later that a youngster is starving or suffocating and they may try to help him.

A youngster who is slowly poisoning himself, trying to live the lies of his culture, however, appears normal. It is the youngster who isn't, who can still see clearly what is going on around him, who looks like a problem. Usually the media are among his captors. They have to be – or the people who run them think they do. With all their wealth, good will, technical skill, and infinite desire to please, not much gets through that would help any of us, young or old, make better sense out of our lives. Why is this so? Primarily because anything as technical, elaborate, and costly as the media must reach a huge number of people with its message if its unit costs are not to be prohibitive.

¹ *The Vanishing Adolescent*, Boston, the Beacon Press, 1959, p. 9.

New CSAA publication

Helping Parents of Handicapped Children: Group Approaches, the proceedings of a two-day conference sponsored jointly last fall by CSAA and the Children's Medical Center of Boston, will be available in July. The pamphlet includes the forum addresses and a summary of discussion by the workshop leaders. The papers are "What Are the Needs of the Handicapped Child?" by William Berenberg, M.D., "The Psychiatric Implications Underlying Parental Concern for Handicapped Children" by George E. Gardner, M.D., "What Can Parents Gain from Group Experience?" by Aline B. Auerbach and "Community Planning for Parents of Handicapped Children" by Leon Sternfeld, M.D. (Single copies, \$1.25.)

I sometimes picture this enormous audience as a middle-aged lady whom I shall call Mrs. Womack, though she was actually a Mrs. Grundy before her second marriage. Originally I believe she was one of the Eumenides. I see her as bending over the frozen food bin in the supermarket so that no one else can either get to it or get by it. She looks as if nothing short of an exceptionally sharp hat pin would move her; but she is really a very nervous woman. She has several adolescent children – though Mr. Womack has passed away – and she is bringing them up on dehydrated, vitamin-enriched imitation orange juice, frozen pizza and pink instant pudding. All of these come in several brands and Mrs. Womack needs guidance. So she watches television; she watches it a lot, while the pizza thaws and the pudding coagulates.

Mrs. Womack is real

I have drawn Mrs. Womack in consciously cruel caricature, partly because I am frightened of her, and partly because I want to show that it is possible – and I think more fruitful – to consider social realities outside the usual framework of good-humored, problem-solving liberalism.

Mrs. Womack is a caricature, but the reality exists. My model is the constricted, either punitive and authoritarian or *nebich* lower middle-class individual of either sex whom social analysts from Ortega to Seymour Lipset have identified as a prime social and political hazard of our time.

I could just as reasonably have made her a man, hearty, fond of smutty jokes, and ready to run the Beatniks out of town, but I probably shouldn't have made her a frump. She is really more likely to be very neat, and conventionally pretty in a controlled, inexpensive way. She often looks like a good manager. She is. Her good management is leading her to the suburbs in increasing numbers, driving her husband before her.

Mrs. Womack, in either the frumpish or fashionable version, is not really open to new experiences. The fashionable Mrs.

Womack is very good at learning new techniques, but that is not at all the same thing. Her poise and equanimity are based on very tight control of what is admitted to awareness and on the rigid denial of feelings that are basically intensely hostile. She wants terribly to be nice, and since her real feelings are anything but nice, she is dreadfully fearful of learning what she feels. She would rather not feel anything at all. She becomes a living cliché, "living and partly living," as T. S. Eliot characterized her counterparts in medieval Canterbury. She keeps smiling and sees to it that the flowers bloom and the grass is trim in the grounds of the concentration camp.

The frumpish Mrs. Womack may be better off. She has a coarse, monotonous fantasy life that would hardly have been good enough for James Joyce's Molly Bloom, but that keeps her going just the same. But she certainly will not tolerate having it disturbed by sudden intrusions.

She may not learn very easily from new experiences; but she has learned from old ones that reality is usually unpleasant. It interrupts her coziness. Nobody is going to bring it into *her* living room, even if she has to get up, walk over to the TV and change the channel.

The issue and the choice

Television, large circulation journalism, the movies have no chance whatever of changing Mrs. Womack, at least in the short run. This, I am afraid, is simply a fact; and it is sheer sentimentality to say they ought to try. One thing that communications research *has* established quite clearly is that the part of any message that increases anxiety just gets split off and blocked out; or, if it is too clearly and vividly presented for that, either gets its meaning distorted beyond recognition or creates intolerable discomfort and is simply shut off.

Start telling the kind of probing, searing truth that great literature or music or even an analytical discussion of a familiar problem tells, and you lose Mrs. Womack at

once. We may well be able to afford the loss, especially if it strengthens healthier and — in Erich Fromm's sense — more productive elements in the culture to resist her and go their own way rejoicing. But lose her we will. We may even make her so angry that she gives up instant pudding altogether, or so anxious that she cannot keep it down.

What happens then depends on the emotional and financial security of the sponsor and the agency. And we ought to note that this is so. It is true that advertising agents customarily and quite arrogantly assume that it is part of their duty to keep out of shows anything that might offend the sponsor's clientele, no matter what this does to the show. I think they are wrong to do it, and we are far too willing to assume that, after all, no man can really be expected to act against his economic or status interest for ethical reasons.

He can. Men — some of them — always have. But the issue is real enough. There is a genuine and deep-seated conflict between the adolescent's interest — I don't mean his current taste or favorite show or felt need, but his vested interest in growth and autonomy — on the one hand; and the interests of Mrs. Womack, the agency and the sponsor on the other.

Adolescents are not "nice"

The adolescent cannot afford to be lied to. He must not be. If he is to get any help from the media in learning who he is and what he really feels, he must be able to trust them. And he cannot, because they believe that in order to stay in business they must keep Mrs. Womack happy; or rather, that they must stay at her side in her continuing life struggle against ever discovering how unhappy she is. This takes a lot of lying.

By lying, I do not mean falsification of the facts, or phony commercials, or anything like that. These occur, and they are deplorable, but I don't think that they matter very much. It is true that they ultimately make everyone so skeptical that we

mistake genuine screams of agony for cries of wolf, and this is harmful. But I don't think they are seriously misleading. It is just as hard to fool people about things they are ready to understand as it is to get them to understand anything that threatens their emotional balance.

By a lie, I mean something more fundamental and more destructive than simply a false statement. I mean the kind of softening up and prettifying of experience that leads youngsters to prefer not to understand in the first place. To be afraid to try, to substitute something nicer for their own perceptions of reality.

Niceness is an awful thing: the niceness that makes chicken ala king out of leftover veal, and could never bring itself to touch grilled kidneys. It calls its false teeth, dentures, and its piety, religion. It insists that death means reunion with loved ones and its characteristic smell is of lilies.

Niceness no longer insists on a happy ending. Mrs. Womack is too much of a masochist for that. She faces death as Portia faces life, if Portia is still facing it — I've lost track of her. She enjoys pathos, although she cannot accept tragedy. Tragedy is not nice. Think of Macbeth permitted to remain king after he had been such a bad man. Think of MacDuff staying so bitter and all, instead of being ennobled by his suffering. Imagine Oedipus going around in public with his face like that. The classics surely are even worse than comic books. They are hardly ever nice.

Adolescents, at their best, are not nice either; not a bit. At their best, they are rough, randy and affectionate, mercurial, passionate, moody and difficult; infuriatingly honest; responsive as a souped-up Jaguar — and just as safe to fool around with, if you are counting more on your good intentions than on your skill, love and empathy. Generally speaking, our culture is afraid of them. A Jaguar when it is fully grown becomes a Bentley or a Rolls; much smoother and sleeker, but with more power and precision than ever, and still, by no means, just any man's vehicle.

The mass media are helping our society to turn young Jaguars into all-purpose, semi-automatic Plymouth station (or shall I be nice and say estate) wagons. But that is what society wants, and the media are contributing nicely to the undertaking. You can tell when they are succeeding, because the themes and values of the media are used to trivialize or evade any real feeling or contact with the situation in which the adolescent finds himself.

Football at O.S.U.

As a quite commonplace example of what I mean, take last autumn's Homecoming celebration at Ohio State University. O.S.U. likes to think of itself as football-mad, and certainly seats in the stadium are as difficult to come by as pews in a fashionable church. Both the team and the spectators are clearly motivated by high principles and a very strong sense of duty. As a part of the celebration for Homecoming game each year, there is a competition among fraternities, sororities, and dormitories to see which can devise the most colorful, original, attractive and witty decorations illustrating the victory to come, in terms of a specific theme chosen and announced well in advance by the student council.

Last year, the theme was simply Huckleberry Hound, a TV cartoon character. The relation between Huckleberry Hound and a football game between the Buckeyes of O.S.U. and the Boilermakers of Purdue is rather elusive; but all the houses broke out with heroic paper effigies of Huckleberry, Yogi Bear, and, generally, a broken-down steam locomotive for Purdue. Variations on an original theme? Not at this time, in that place; although that place has James Thurber as its most eminent alumnus.

Football is one of the things these youngsters believe excites them most. If they were not interested in it they would feel not bored by it so much, as anxious about their own status in the peer group. Many of those who are bored by it have to grow beards and read Ferlinghetti to one an-

other to reassure themselves that they belong somewhere. You can't just take football or leave it alone at O.S.U. And yet, it is one of the mass media, too. You don't really get involved with it; you nosh on it. It doesn't give rise to any real personal fantasies. And their common television symbol is about as empty. They seize on it as a symbol and declare it officially to be one, but it doesn't occur to them at all that a symbol, by definition, stands for some real meaning or experience. A Spanish peasant woman, fresh from the ceremonial procession to San Carlos Borromeo, would think these youngsters mad, though any alienist could tell her they were only alienated. Huckleberry Hound is not responsible for their alienation, of course, but he cannot help them escape from it as Huckleberry Finn might. The Hound has been civilized; the widder has caught up with him.

In Stillwater, a community

I cannot but compare the vacuity of this life to that I encountered at Oklahoma A. & M. College just as we were getting into World War II. Oklahoma A. & M. is a large and in some ways genuinely cosmopolitan state school. It has been running an agricultural experiment station in Ethiopia since the days of Point IV, and when the Emperor Haile Selassie made his state visit to this country a few years ago he made a special trip to Stillwater and was given a royal barbecue; there was no question but that Royalty could be integrated. Its students were intelligent, middle-class kids from farms or very small towns, wonderfully diverse and confident of their own feelings, and that their special forms of individuality would be respected.

The mass media were available to the adolescents at A. & M. at that time, of course. They existed. There were the movies and the radio; the present Governor Davis was then at the peak of his powers as a hillbilly vocalist. But they didn't matter much, because what didn't exist in

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Stillwater was the mass society. It was an ugly, gossipy, occasionally vicious community, but it *was* a community. There were very few people around whose lives were not perfectly comprehensible to them — gruesome though they might be — in the sense that they understood something of the beginning and the ends of all the processes they were involved in.

They knew from experience who they were and what they could and couldn't do. This was particularly true of students in the College, because farm boys in high school there, if they were thought to have any brains and character, were quite normally trusted with, say, ten thousand 1940 dollars worth of poultry or fat stock to raise, show and sell, completely on their own. These are arts — not tricks or routines. They must be learned as particular sets of related skills and insights; otherwise they will not work. Ortega gives as his classic definition of the mass man with his mass mind: "The mass is all that which sets no value on itself, good or ill, based on *specific* grounds." This is a superb definition. I saw very few boys or girls at A. & M. who would have met its terms.

The need for specificity

The mass media for the most part are aimed at, and cultivate, those who do meet its terms. Here, I think, is where the schools, in ceasing to demand and cultivate specific and significant — though not necessarily academic — kinds of competence become mass media. There are no longer, usually, any real criteria for participation. The aim is to reach a level that includes everybody and makes no one nervous. This destroys the basis for any real sense of personal worth.

A youngster who cannot speak French, or fix a radio, or drive a car, or do mathematics, or play basketball, or love ought to know it. He ought never to be punished for it, but he ought not to be allowed to go on pretending that he can't, or interfering with those who can. It is too important, especially to him, to lie about.

There has been a gradual but significant and, I think, very dangerous change in one element of the concept of democracy in the Western world. We began, I believe, with the idea that everybody who played according to the rules ought to have an equal chance in life — a healthy corrective, presumably, to the consequences of irresponsible special privilege. This is a sound idea, though difficult and sometimes dangerous to apply, but it is a very different idea from holding that the rules for all important undertakings ought to be such that no special advantage can accrue to special intelligence, or special devotion, or special sensitivity, or to any specificity whatever; except the rather sly speciality of lifemanship, which flourishes when more relevant skills are stillborn or have been driven underground.

Our human dilemma

That is pretty well where we are now. The result is a cultural vacuum that the mass media are designed to fill. Oh, still being partly natural, we abhor it. We worry about it, anyway. Everybody is working on values nowadays or talking about them; if I understand correctly the basis for my colleagues' anxiety, they are terrified that unless we get some very soon the Russians will have values before we do.

Maybe they will. It would be a beginning anyway. But I doubt it. They are mass media, too. Under our system the pressure to reach a mass audience takes an economic form, and we blame — not unjustly — the agency man or the sponsor. In a socialist democracy the pressure would take the form of the struggle to justify appropriations, and in a communist state, that of an ideological struggle to convince a petty bureaucracy that the people's resources should ever be devoted to expression beyond the people's taste.

But the difficulties would remain the same. Despite the devotion of the media to them, the fault, I think, lies not with our stars, but with ourselves, that we are underlings.

Social responsibility and the use of

television for children

Good programming for children demands responsible broadcasters, thoughtful parents and, above all, a recovery of basic human values

By Frederick B. Rainsberry

In our time, when mass communication has brought us all closer together, social units have become larger and perhaps less responsible. We have tended to lose our sense of belonging to a community and have been thrown back upon ourselves to find the answers to the questions which concern our destiny as individual human beings.

With an increasing sense of guilt we are looking closer at our own way of life. We are fearful that our codes of values may not be as meaningful as we thought they were. Through newspapers, magazines, radio, films and television, the hucksters recreate an image of our society which they believe the mass of people to be. Some of us fear or doubt that our cherished ideals are real enough or strong enough to resist the commercial priesthood of mediocrity. Is this fear justified? Are our ideals so flimsy that the cult of mediocrity can reduce them to emptiness or that the cult of power can destroy them? These, it seems to me, are the questions which confront us today.

It is not uncommon in human affairs that a seemingly neutral event will occur—such as a major technological change—whose influence is of such a nature that it tends to re-define classic human problems. For a neutral event to have this deep effect, it must have potentiality to touch universal well-springs of human thinking, feeling,

and acting. In television's potential to influence the young, consists its power to re-define the cluster of intellectual and moral values within which we discharge our responsibility to our children.

It is this cluster of values, intellectual and moral, which is of immediate concern then to me as a broadcaster, for it is within this context that the competing demands of professional and commercial television must be worked out. Working daily within this context, I sense a deep uncertainty in our culture as to the responsibility which the more mature have for the less mature; I meet with a double standard of morals—one for adults, and one for the young; I feel two opposing tendencies, one exerting toward conformity, the other toward individualism—both affecting the development of selfhood in the young. These are confusing our judgment as to what characterizes good programming for children. Since this is the context of my daily work, and since I insist it is basically a moral context, I must present it to you as such.

Dr. Rainsberry is national supervisor of children's programs for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. He holds a Ph.D. degree from Michigan State University in philosophy and English literature and taught both subjects in Canadian and U.S. colleges and high schools from 1940-1954. In 1954 he joined Toronto CBC as supervising producer of children's programs. He was appointed to his present post in July 1958.

The art of scapegoating

What we as a society can do about the positive and effective use of mass media is closely related to our deepest convictions about human personality and the moral values by which we regulate our society. In the past, there have been several ways in which men have tried to cope with evil. One device still known today was recommended in the Old Testament. Following ritual procedures of sacrifice "all the iniquities of the people of Israel, and all their transgressions, all their sins" were put upon the head of a goat.

In modern times, scapegoating is the popular device by means of which we find a single cause for the evils which surround us. We hope to remove the evil by heaping the evils of society upon the head of some symbolic goat.

In the time of Socrates, the question was even more specific. The Greeks related education very closely to the problem of good and evil. They set about the education of their children to produce a society of just men. In Plato's *Republic*, Socrates recommends censorship of the tales to be read to young children. This recommendation was based upon a conviction that the soul of the individual began its development toward maturity from the day of birth. Like all aristocratic Greeks, Socrates abhorred any environmental force which might hinder fulfillment of the soul's destiny. There is here a deep concern for the integrity of the individual. For it was believed that only men of integrity could be just men. It is this same concern for the integrity of the individual which lies at the heart of the controversy over television.

In our concern for the integrity of the individual, mass media have become the scapegoat for all negative forces which work against our aims and ideals for the growth and education of children. When the United States Senate Committee on the Judiciary was investigating the influence of television on juvenile delinquency, it was found that seven out of ten adults thought

some of the blame could be placed on mystery and crime programs on television and radio and that violence on television produced tension in children. However, a comprehensive study made in England under Dr. Hilde Himmelweit* on the reactions of children to television demonstrated that television does not induce anxiety patterns, and that children are not disturbed by the violence of cowboy films or that of most detective or murder plays. The general conclusion of the report was that "the intrinsic power of the medium is exaggerated, the resilience of the child seriously underestimated, while at the same time, the (pre-TV) past is idealised."

These conclusions have been confirmed in my own experience. I think that children enjoy the cowboy pictures because the clichés of the plot are familiar and predictable. They enjoy the rapid action and identify with the cowboy hero. The presence of an animal such as horse or dog is a further attraction. The CBC carries several programs for children on syndicated film. We screen these carefully, rejecting the more sordid themes.

Protecting the child's integrity

Our staff is more concerned about some old-time movies which depict social prejudices, because these are retrograde to the progress society has made in the past generation in overcoming racial and minority prejudices. We are also concerned about the revival of the satiric cartoon of the thirties, when bitterness was popular among adults. We are most concerned about those films which produce tension among children. It is dangerous to stimulate love for dog or hero and then build a plot around threats or danger to their lives. It is wrong to create situations which are beyond the emotional experience of children. In reading, a child may objectify these tense situations and reduce them to manageable proportions, but the visual presentation is often overwhelming. Therefore, parents should

*For a fuller report of Dr. Himmelweit's study, see page 33.

be ready to interpret to their children situations which stimulate feelings of anxiety or tension, and it should be a primary obligation of the broadcaster to avoid any deliberate over-stimulation.

As a broadcaster trying to develop a responsible policy for handling both the professional and commercial demands of television, I have two major concerns about the impact of mass media on children. First, I am disturbed by parental hostility which is motivated by fear. Too often, parent groups raise wrong or irrelevant issues, criticizing cowboy films and recalling with nostalgic pleasure the intrinsically more harmful films they saw in their own youth. I am concerned also about the snobs who assume that all classics are good and all cowboy films or cartoons are bad.

My personal and more ultimate concern is to protect the integrity of the child. I think the broadcaster has a responsibility—as great as the school's responsibility—to foster the creative growth and development of the child. It may be true that acts of violence in cowboy films do not bring about juvenile delinquency, but there is something wrong with people who are satisfied with such naive and crude concepts of human character. Is it good enough to portray the life of man as a dull cliché? Or to treat personality as a mere pawn in a cheap story? The characterizations of second- and third-rate programs reflect a basic contempt for human personality.

A positive approach

Our approach to the problems of mass media and their impact on children must be positive. The negative implications of censorship must be avoided, and a creative attitude taken both to human personality and to the medium itself. Let us remember that television is an artistic medium capable of providing significant aesthetic experiences for the viewers.

In planning programs for the CBC national network schedule, we keep several principles in mind. First of all, it is wrong to make a sharp separation between enter-

tainment and education for children. In adult programming, there is the assumption that entertainment is a device for escape from the world of responsibility. Escapism, however, is not a normal pattern for children. Miss Mary Field, who was for many years the Chief Producer of Films for Children in the British Children's Film Foundation, has said that "Children go to the pictures in order to take an active part in the proceedings. They are perpetually on the move as they follow the action on the screen."

Children are vitally entertained in the search for information and they enjoy the adventure of a new experience. A good children's program is built on the principle that there is an unbroken continuity between learning and entertainment. In a Sunday hour-long magazine, the CBC Children's Department seeks to entertain young people from eight to fourteen years. Visual continuity is planned to blend social and

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aesthetic experiences through dance, puppetry, documentary films, significant personalities and dramatic action. The Canadian Olympic Gymnastic Team was presented with all its athletic skill while its grace of movement was reiterated in special choreography by the dancers of the Royal Winnipeg Ballet. Documentary film provides a regular feature of the activity of youth across Canada.

Relating programs to children's play

Our chief responsibility is to relate our program material to the play of children, for it is in play that they learn to be sociable and discover creative gestures in movement and in speech. In presenting a dance on the screen, we aim to provide significant creative continuity for the presentation of the great tradition of ballet as well as folk dancing so that it will appear as a meaningful experience to children. In a program on sports, we work closely with the schools to produce a program of physical activity which not only entertains children but serves to stimulate the maximum growth and development of which they are capable.

The producer should concern himself particularly with the artistic properties of television cameras. Since children are so vitally entertained by information and detail, he should never lose sight of the great power of the television camera to select and emphasize detail. Using cover shots to give a total orientation to the setting, and the closeup camera for the selection of detail, an artistic and sensitive producer can provide vital experiences for young viewers. Such considerations as these are particularly important in the organization of science programs for children.

The producer of children's programs has a great obligation to help realize significant social experiences. Robert Homme, in *The Friendly Giant*, has said that his first objective in entertaining the very young is to make them aware of consideration for others. He also aims to make the child sensitive to the smallest details in his immed-

iate environment. It is important for the child's growth and development that he not only learn to know himself by consideration for other people, but that he take pleasure in the simple things in the world around him.

Children love puppets. Through experience in the planning of children's programs, I can offer some reasons for their pleasure in this art. It is perhaps true that a child can comprehend a dramatic experience with puppets more easily and achieve a greater degree of empathy than with live performers. Puppet characters can be manipulated within the child's realm of fantasy. He can objectify the dramatic action and take it in at the level of his own emotional comprehension without being overwhelmed. Also, the child recognizes the puppet as an artifact — something he could make himself. The abstract quality of the puppet enables the child to fill in his own conception of the character.

Many parents are concerned about their children's imitation of what they see on television. This should be the concern of every producer of children's programs. The pictures in a television show should evoke positive and creative responses in the child. We must, therefore, select TV performers who can stimulate happy and creative responses. We know children enjoy seeing other children in natural situations and that they like information about children in other lands. It is in these gestures of imitation and response that mass media can have the greatest formative influence.

The parents' part

These are a few suggestions about the responsibility of the broadcaster. What is the obligation of the parent and indeed of society as a whole? In making criticisms of the impact of TV on children, parents should consider how a child views what he sees. The activity of a clown may seem foolish to a sophisticated adult, but this is no basis for its rejection. The questions to be asked are: Is the clown able to use mime in an artistic manner? Is his humour the

sort which invites a happy and joyful response? The ultimate test of good programming for children must be in terms of the potentiality of the program material to develop and widen the child's realm of fantasy and reality.

Parents should monitor programs for children, for if we use television only as a baby-sitter, we must expect that negative influences on our children will pass unexamined and unchallenged. As well as watching what we want our children to see, we should also watch what we do not approve of. This method avoids making a negative issue out of television viewing and inspires confidence in the values which we ultimately cherish for our children.

Our double standards

Ultimately, our problems with mass media and our children center in issues about the nature of personality and of moral values. Our approach to the problems of our children seems to be largely in terms of a set of constant conflicts. We teach the child to be an individual at all costs, but we constantly negate his efforts to be an individual by teaching him to conform. We urge upon him that he must love his neighbor as himself, while raising him in an environment of ruthless competition. We insist that he watch ideal television fare, while we gratify our own taste for escape entertainment. We subscribe to educational principles which teach him self-expression, but we take the easy way out when his gestures interfere with our own activity of doing as we please. With such double standards, a consistent environment for the proper growth and development of the child is not possible.

It is this lack of faith in the child's personality that lures anxious parents into social and cultural determinism. We imagine that a harmful cultural climate is closing in around us and so we make the desperate unsocial gesture of self-affirmation. It is in this self-conscious state of mind that we lash out at the hucksters who exploit a conforming society. It is because we have lost

faith in the ideals of our culture that we can be victimized. We have ourselves to blame for the state in which our culture finds itself in respect to enduring values, for the ethics we teach, and the expedients we live by, are often very different.

A sense of community

If we would preserve personality from isolation and self-deception, we must not lose faith in the idea of a living society. It is in this state of isolation and self-deception that so much of the destruction of values takes place. We see individuals in a confused society, cherishing values which are not real; and so personality, no longer sacred, seems to be nothing but a function of the dullness of conformity. As we lose faith in the dynamic and creative elements of our heritage, we lose our sense of community, and the ideals by which we organize society appear unreal. Our only gesture of defiance is one of negative censorship.

If we are to preserve the mass media for a living society, we must recover our sense of social destiny. Then only will we put aside the inadequate gesture of scapegoating. Then only will we be able to use technological achievements. Then only will we recover our sense of the sacredness of the individual.

The challenge to professional groups today is to see to it that the current of non-activity and indifference in which society presently finds itself does not force it into demagoguery, on the one hand, or self-deceit, censoring and scapegoating on the other. We must balance professional open-mindedness against loyalty to principle; we must distinguish between tolerance and indifference. The ultimate repudiation of the exploiters of mass media begins with a conviction in the sacredness of human personality. When values which encourage creative growth of the young mind and achievement of goals shared by a living (i.e. loving) society are pre-eminent, we will then take pleasure in entertainment that recreates, informs and fulfills.

Getting the most from the mass media: How and by whom?

The following excerpts have been taken from the discussion and addresses presented to the Luncheon and Afternoon Sessions of CSAA's 1960 Conference.

CENSORSHIP IS NO ANSWER

Eric Johnston

Mr. Johnston has been President of the Motion Picture Association of America since 1945. Long active in public affairs, he has served on a variety of federal boards and commissions and in several diplomatic roles under three Presidents—Roosevelt, Truman and Eisenhower.

Within the past dozen years, the American motion picture has undergone a revolution of a magnitude never before experienced in this industry. So that you may see at a glance what has transpired, I will start out with the days right after America emerged from World War II.

In those days, Hollywood enjoyed the most happily prosperous period of its development. American producers made more than 450 feature-length pictures a year. Movie houses from Broadway to Main Street and in neighborhoods throughout America numbered around 22,000.

There was no need for bank night or bingo in those days when an average of some 90 million citizens, men, women and children, lined up at the box office each week in the cheerful exercise of America's national habit — going to the movies.

In the late 1940's, choosing a film for the whole family was easy. There were only a few films that didn't appeal to and suit all ages. The motion picture theater was the unchallenged center of entertainment.

The future, as seen from Hollywood and Vine, looked dazzling indeed. The only de-

tectable ripple of a problem was the generally rising costs of production. But with an ever-improving box office, no one minded these costs too much.

And then something happened, an event which transformed this medium, the motion picture. Some industry prophets, inhabiting the lush forest of those days, perhaps saw only the trees. What should have been seen, instead, were television antennas — rising above the chimneys of millions of American homes.

Now let's jump ahead . . . to 1960. A few case-hardened figures will help us see what occurred in these years, figures comparing the state of the industry immediately after the war — and in 1960.

Today, instead of 90 million goes a week, our domestic weekly motion picture attendance has been cut more than in half.

Today, instead of 22,000 sturdy brick-and-mortar theaters, there are now only 13,000 so-called four-wall theaters, plus an additional 5,000 open-air drive-in theaters.

Instead of 450 pictures a year, Hollywood last year produced 150.

These stark statistics tell of a shift in America's sentiments. The movie theater, once America's massive popular love, had been jilted for that glassy-eyed siren in the living room.

This was the uncomfortable truth. Those who tried for a time to dismiss television were finally obliged to recognize it for what it was — a theater in the home. And this theater-in-the-home has grown to some 50 million sets today, as television has be-

come the great mass medium of the decade, a rival as well as a channel for films.

Thus, television brought change to the movies and to movie-goers. Change is often upsetting, often confusing. Perhaps the older we get, the harder become the arteries of our capacity for change.

With this challenge of change, Hollywood and the movie theaters have sought to improve their product, to put on a better and more appealing program than anyone else.

I want to urge parents to understand these facts, to understand the changes that have come about in the motion picture in these dozen or so years.

As responsible parents, we should all welcome this growing-up process — this ability of the screen to deal with broader and more varied and more mature subjects than in the past. In my judgment, it has resulted in more fine motion pictures than during any previous period in Hollywood's history.

And it also should require parents, in fulfilling their responsibilities, to exercise selectivity and discernment, particularly in guiding their children to motion picture entertainment.

In these growing years, of course, not all films produced have been great films. Some, seeking maturity, fell short. Some, seeking sensation, produced nothing of lasting value. Some — and usually these same ones — were box office failures.

The criticism

If change is upsetting and confusing, it is also a time of criticism, and the motion picture has had its share.

What form has it taken?

Some is objective and constructive. It seeks to differentiate between what is good and what is shoddy. It bases itself on reasonable standards of good taste, of propriety, of judgment.

There is another form. It is irrational and often irresponsible. It seeks to indict a whole industry for the faults of a few. And it turns invariably to one end — censorship.

But censorship is no answer. It is no answer because it doesn't work. It never has. It never will. Censorship can't give us what we seek. It is negative. It can't improve quality. It can't improve taste.

It will actually degrade and lower taste. Responsible producers today maintain standards that are far higher than could be written into any censorship. They do this under our Production Code because they feel their obligation to the public.

Censorship would be an open invitation to the irresponsibles, to the fast-buck producers, who cater to the lowest common denominator of public taste. It would be an invitation to them to go as far as the law allowed . . . and with the law's sanctions to back them up. I can't conceive that parents want this.

Of course, we parents must help our children to make choices along the way if we wish them to grow up to be responsive and responsible adults. We must help our children choose motion picture entertainment, just as we help them to discriminate among books and music and art and all the other experiences of life.

They need to know the reasons, the bases, for making good choices — the reasons for seeking the good and ignoring the bad. They need our firm and confident guidance.

SOME BASIC QUESTIONS

Otto Klineberg

Dr. Klineberg is Professor of Psychology at Columbia University, and the author of several important volumes in social psychology. He is currently serving as Secretary General, International Union of Scientific Psychology. He served as moderator of the afternoon panel discussion on the impact of mass media.

Five major sources, or institutions, have been regarded as responsible in large measure, for the way in which the child looks on the world, looks on other people, and looks on values and attitudes which he de-

velops. They are: the home; the school; the peer group (the group of youngsters of the same age, from whom the child obtains many of his points of view), religion and religious instruction; the mass media.

In trying to understand the nature of the influence of mass media, five major questions present themselves.

1. Do mass media really change prevailing attitudes or are they the reflection of prevailing attitudes? Do the mass media create values in our society, or are they merely the mirror of values in our society? Does what happens to a child when he looks at mass media depend upon what kind of child it is — or on what is in the media?

2. Within the context of our general feeling about the importance of freedom, we have an occasional feeling that some degree of control or censorship may be needed. When, if ever, is this control justified? Is it a different problem when we deal with children from the problem of freedom versus censorship when we deal with adults?

3. Should the content of the mass media be mainly concerned with giving an adequate picture of reality, or should it, at least to some extent, represent an escape from reality? If it should represent both, in what combination should there be this mirroring of what the world is really like and the escaping from what the world is really like?

4. Should we look upon this problem as requiring a positive or a negative approach? By a positive approach I mean: should we fight for more good programs? By a negative approach I mean: should we fight for fewer "poor" programs? Or does it require a combination of the two. Many people, noting the existence of poor programs on the air, look upon the problem as one of censorship or elimination. Others see it as a problem of adding to the undoubted variety and array of good programs that we already have.

5. Whose is the responsibility? Is this the responsibility of those who are in control of production of the mass media, or

is it the responsibility of the wider public? And if it is the responsibility of the wider public, in what ways can we as part of that wider public make our opinions felt?

These five issues are not necessarily the ones our panelists will deal with, but I am hoping that they will touch on at least some of them.

WHAT DOES RESEARCH SHOW?

Joseph T. Klapper

A specialist in communications research, Dr. Klapper is on the staff of the Behavioral Research Service of the General Electric Company. A former Research Associate at the Bureau of Applied Social Research, Columbia University, he is the author of a forthcoming volume on the effects of mass communications.

The five major fears about the mass media in relation to children, might be called time, crime, passivity, adult material, and taste. Research has addressed itself to all these topics, and I have particularly addressed myself to those studies that bear on crime, passivity, and the effects of adult material. In reference to these topics, and I daresay in reference to the others as well, the great weight of the findings seems to me to paint a very definite picture.

I think it has been pretty well demonstrated that the mass media do not serve as the primary determinant or even as a very important determinant of any of the basic attitudes or the basic behavior patterns of either children or adults.

This is not to say that they have no influence at all, but only that their influence seems to be incidental to other forces; or if it not incidental, to pertain to rather superficial aspects of attitude or behavior rather than to basic attitudes and behavior.

Put another way, the weight of research seems to indicate that the child brings to the media a set of attitudes and a pattern of behavior which is determined by other forces, such as home, school, religion and peer group. The media do not seem to

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change these patterns of attitude or behavior, but rather to be used in accordance with them.

To be somewhat more explicit in reference to many of the fears we have mentioned: research typically finds no difference between children who are heavily exposed to the media, or to particular types of media content, and those who are not so heavily exposed. The heavily exposed children appear, for example, to be, in general, no more inclined toward violence or to be more passively oriented than the light media users. Nor do they appear, for the most part, to have a remarkably different view of the adult world.

On the other hand, some differences have been noted between these heavy and light media users. There is some evidence, for example, that heavy users are more likely to have problems relative to their relations with their families and peers, but — and here is the essential point, I think — these differences appear to have existed before, or at least while they were developing these media habits. The characteristics do not seem to be the result of exposure to the media, but rather the cause of their using the media for such purposes as escape, withdrawal, or to feed an already existing appetite for violence. Thus the media seem to provide the child with a way of exercising his existing interests and behavioral tendencies, whether these are socially desirable or undesirable. That exercise may, of course, reinforce and strengthen those orientations, but it does not seem to be their source.

The sources

Where then are the sources? The general literature and data about childhood indicate that these basic interests and attitudes are the product of a vast variety of forces interacting in complex ways. I believe strongly, and I think research supports me, that it is primarily to these forces rather than to the media that one must look if one aims to reduce delinquency or to build socially and intellectually respon-

sible citizens out of young people. If we are to help the media to serve the best social purposes of which they are capable, I feel that we must direct our attention to the formation of their child audiences at least as intensely as we direct our attention to media content.

WANTED: AN OASIS

By Robert Saudek

Mr. Saudek is perhaps best known to TV fans for his experimental award-winning programs created for "Omnibus," a series he launched eight years ago. A former vice-president of the American Broadcasting Company, he now heads his own independent producing company, Robert Saudek Associates.

Statistical and other studies of television's effect on our young people purport to prove all sorts of things. For instance, one study concludes that primary grade pupils appear to show gains in vocabulary as a result of television viewing. (The implication is that these are positive gains—not just the addition to their vocabulary of words like "crunchiest" or "crispiest!") Another survey concludes that 51 percent of children would prefer a sound spanking to a parental black-out of their favorite program. However, this, like the first conclusion, also fails to supply the critical information: What is their "favorite program?"

But we know from yet another survey that this program must have been, in order of popularity among children, *Maverick* first, or in second place, *Gunsmoke*, or in third place, *Steve Allen*, or in fourth place, *Shock Theatre*. For small children in the primary grades, it would have been *Zoro* in first place, *Bugs Bunny* in second, *Shock Theatre* or the *Mickey Mouse Club*.

Now, taking these curiously foreshortened surveys together, we learn that children want, for instance, *Bugs Bunny* or *Maverick* or *Shock Theatre* even at the cost of a spanking, and that these shows appear to increase children's vocabularies. All of this, of course, is arrant hogwash and it

does not take a survey or any other statistical study for you and me to know that. Anyone who confuses these programs as uplift or positive values is a fool. They may be entertaining and they may not be harmful, but they surely are not the twentieth-century route to improve vocabularies or, as another survey would have it, the route to more reading by children.

The only statistics which I find significant draw no qualitative conclusions or morals. They report the average number of hours spent weekly on television. For elementary school children in 1951, it was 19 hours a week and in 1959, it was 21 hours. For high school children nine years ago, it was 14 hours and last year, it was 12.3 hours. For parents, there was no change in viewing over the years; in 1951, they watched 20 hours; in 1959, they watched 20.5 hours, putting them in a class with elementary school children. Teachers' viewing has jumped from 9 to 11 hours a week in those nine years.

My conclusion and my recommendations are based on these last statistics:

Recommendations

First, too many children are being allowed to spend too much time in this day-dreaming inactivity. People were not endowed with their earthly careers simply in order to spend their time sitting indoors and staring idly at anything, be it television or opera or picture magazines. There is too much else to do: baseball playing, visiting at the zoo, acting, reading, going on nature walks, sailing boats or just arguing. Therefore, I propose that a practical limit be placed on the number of hours a child may watch television each day, and that he be encouraged to make his selections in advance, and with care, lest he waste thirty precious minutes.

Equally important, I have in mind the suggestions that we will make to him for filling his remaining leisure hours both joyfully and profitably—that is a parent's job, not only the negative half, but the positive half as well.

My other recommendation is that a moratorium be called on all surveys that set out to discover what television, as it exists today, does or doesn't do for children, and that everyone's full energy be devoted instead to demanding first-rate television for children on a far wider scale than exists today. A two-year plan should be undertaken: a massive effort to create, finance and broadcast a series of first-rate television programs under the general title, "Oasis," to be undertaken jointly by selective organizations, important writers, directors, and stars, by the large talent agencies, by the three networks, by the National Association of Radio and Television Broadcasters, by parent organizations, and by schools. Attacking it from a standpoint of a two-year period to reach certain goals, it is not inconceivable that two years from now there will be, for example, three one-hour programs—perhaps one Friday night at 8 on one network, one Saturday night at 8 on another network and another on Sunday night at 8.

Children's span of interest in a given program ordinarily lasts for three years. Certainly no child of ten is interested in the same programs he was at age seven; no child of thirteen is still watching the ten-year-old programs. Therefore, there is a very rapid rotation of generations of children interested in such programs and it seems to me that residuals, which have become so financially important in television, could be on an even faster basis now than they are for some of today's Westerns.

Television panel

Peter B. Neubauer, psychiatric consultant to CSAA, participated in a panel discussion of "Television: Its Responsibility Towards Our Children," at a community meeting sponsored by Library Associates of the New York School of Social Work, Columbia University this spring. Other panelists were Irving Gitlin, Bennett Cerf, Elizabeth Meier and William Tracy. A transcript of the discussion is on file at the School library, 2 East 91st St., New York 28, N. Y.

INFLUENCING THE MASS MEDIA

Gilbert Seldes

Mr. Seldes' first book, "The Seven Lively Arts," is still a standard reference, and was the lively precursor to his continuing career of criticism, comment and participation in the mass media. One of the earliest TV executives, he directed CBS television from 1937 to 1945. He is currently Director of the Annenberg School of Communication at the University of Pennsylvania.

We have been assured that none of the mass media—or all of them put together—have any exclusive effect on children: they are part of our integrated society. But before you know it, by some kind of sleight-of-hand, this comes to mean that they have no significant effect. It is all perfectly trifling; any effect comes from the family and the peer group.

Children, we are told, get their attitudes and values from families—which consist of parents and children. What are the parents doing? The parents, we are told, are getting a breathing spell, which they thoroughly deserve, after the tensions of a six-to seven-hour working day. This breathing spell lasts, on the average, three hours a night—a long-break breathing spell. By definition, then, since they are spending so much time in front of a TV set, the family is a group of parents and children in which one side is interfering with the television pleasures of the other side. They aren't having a family life, they are all looking at television—in separate rooms if they are rich enough to have two sets. Children also get their effects from the peer group—but where did the peers get their effects and their attitudes and their values? Right from the same place.

I suggest that nobody should take any great satisfaction in the fact that as of this moment seventy-six more people are reading a book—or whatever the figure may be. The actual figures are, I think, that more than half of the entire population in the United States hasn't read a book in the past three weeks—and that is true also of

more than half of our college educated population. We are way below the European average in this matter.

We are now only in the first generation of mass media influence on children, and it is not for us to be content and say that things haven't gotten very bad yet. What are our children's grandchildren going to be like if we can project what is happening now? I am very skeptical and very worried. If it is possible that we are spending nineteen to twenty-four hours a week on a thing that has no effect on us—then this is the greatest waste of time in all recorded history. Even if television programs do nothing but keep us from doing something else—a greater variety of things, even if they are not better—there is a loss of values. I think that we have to base our demands for responsibility on the part of broadcasters and other managers of mass media on the fact that they are having a great effect on us.

I would say also that the mass media, taken as a whole, are addressed to a tiny fraction of all the possible interests and curiosities of the very majority which they serve. The average person served by the mass media is served only with a tiny zoning of his interests, wants and needs. At the moment, a beginning is being made in discovering what really are the *wants* of people—not their preference between two programs which are fundamentally alike and lie in the same intellectual zone and the same zone of emotional maturity. The latent and conscious needs have to be discovered, and the responsibility has to be put in the proper hands to satisfy these needs.

Now, I have, of course, the brilliant solution for all these problems: proper hands—the hands of the public. The public is more than all the audiences put together, and the public must find some ways to make its own ideas of what the public interest is heard and felt. The people—that small group (and it is not too small) who are sufficiently aware of their interests—have to get into action.

Probably most of you have some sense of defeatism: we are so few and they, whoever they are, are so many. I therefore point out to you that the people who went to Philadelphia and wrote the Constitution of the United States were the representatives, not of the three-and-a-half million people who lived in the United States at that time, but the representatives of less than 5 percent of all the people who had a right to vote. I suggest to you that if less than 5 percent of the inhabitants of a country can create a country, less than 5 percent—which means just you and I and about seven other people—can create the social mechanism by which we can control the institutions of this country including, of course, the mass media.

THE PROGRAMS THAT AREN'T

Paul Tripp

For his many contributions to television, Author, Actor and Producer Paul Tripp has been awarded the "Emmy," the first Look Magazine award, four Ohio State awards, and the Peabody Award. To millions of youngsters for four years, he was CBS-TV's "Mr. I-Magination"—a show he created, staged, and starred in. Producer and star of "On the Carousel" for more than five years, he has also written more than two dozen record albums for children.

I have been very puzzled by one thing. Many organizations and well-intentioned people talk about improving what's on television, and I always keep feeling that they are talking about something that isn't there. What disturbs me is the lack of programming—the small percentage of children's programming that has been offered the children. Our child population seems to be the most disenfranchised majority ever seen. Everybody wrings their hands about payola and other areas of commission, but I haven't heard anybody come out and say "What about the areas of omission?" Nobody seems to be talking about these.

According to some statistics, 99 percent of all children watch television daily as opposed to 87 percent of all adults, and yet

if you go down a list of the shows presented each day you will find, I think, maybe 1 percent, if that, of programming that deals with something that a child might really be interested in. I believe that you as the public are the biggest lobby interest in this whole country. You read all the papers, and you find out that everybody is interested in ratings. You are the ratings. It is all very well to say that certain things need to be improved, but there is a big gap that we've got to fill, and I suggest that one of the major efforts be to: fill that gap.

CHALLENGE TO PARENTS

Josette Frank

Miss Frank, Director of CSAA's Department of Children's Books and Mass Media, is well known to CHILD STUDY readers for her many articles on children's reading, listening and viewing. A revised edition of her book for parents, "Your Child's Reading Today, will be published by Doubleday this fall. She is the author of CSAA's pamphlet, "Television: How to Use It Wisely With Children."

Most of us, and by us I do mean parents, are ambivalent about the mass media. We welcome them for the great value they sometimes bring to our children. At the same time, we worry about their accent on violence, their distortion of human behavior, their low level of humor. We find it convenient, for instance, to use television as a baby sitter, or to ship Junior off to the movies to get him out of our hair on cleaning day, or to give him a comic book to keep him quiet in the dentist's office. Yet we have an uncomfortable feeling that we are taking the easy way out, or feel we should be taking our child to places of interest or supplying him with the right reading or doing any of those fine things the books say we should do to give them more "creative experiences."

Rightly or wrongly—a little of both perhaps—we blame television, movies and comics for whatever behavior we, in the deepest sense, attribute to our own shortcomings as parents. This may account in

part, at least, for the intensity of parental emotion that clusters about the mass media. Part of our anger also may be due to fear or feelings of frustration. We feel particularly helpless before these pervasive intruders in our home; we are afraid we no longer can control our children's experiences.

We are not as helpless as we think. We surely can influence our children *and* these mass media. As members of the community we can take note, for example, of the promising growth of educational television stations and see that our schools and cities include these in their budgets. We can voice our approval and give our support to good programs and good movies; our disapproval to bad ones. This is our responsibility—and obligation.

But to do this effectively, we must first be sure we know what is good and what is bad for children, and why—based on something more than our prejudices. Children love noise, for instance; children over seven, it has been found, are normally able to distinguish between reality and pretend; they feel secure when their programs or their comics follow a known pattern. There is something deeply satisfying to children to find that, on the screen anyway, the good guy always wins. Even though the child identifies with the villain, and enjoys his villainy, it fits in with his conscience that the villain is punished.

Yet, we also must recognize the danger in the constant reiteration that right is determined and difficulties resolved by the fast draw; that winning is right in itself. More dangerous still is the pervasive feeling, in the insensate killings in crime programs, that human life is cheap.

We cannot abandon our children to the television set, movies or the comics: what is needed is alertness. If we count on TV or the movies as a babysitter, we had best know what goes on between the baby and the sitter. Books, and especially television, draw a world of people into our children's lives and make them feel that they are part

of the great world outside. But what kind of a world? It has good people and bad people; good ideas about life and bad ideas. Our children must count on us to help them interpret these ideas.

Not that we must constantly supervise their reading or television viewing—this would be impossible even if it were desirable, which it isn't. Rather we must keep the channels of communication open between us.

Each of us has to know for our own child, whether a particular program is overstimulating or leads to distress, when to call a halt; when to remove the toddler from the room while his older brother is enjoying all that bang-bang; when to insist on the little one having her program, or Dad's right to mealtime without television. We must know, too, what all these media are offering that has value for our children without expecting them always to like what we like or even what we want them to like. Yet we can encourage our youngsters to make choices and develop their discrimination both by discussing with them the programs or films they have seen (or perhaps that we have seen with them) and by the example of our own choices. It is, in fact, a private hope of mine that one day our school children will take courses in appreciating and evaluating the mass media, as they now take courses in appreciation of literature, art and music.

Interlocking communications

Meanwhile, we must learn to use the newest of these media along with their sister arts as we once had to learn to use books: for books also were among the interdicted not so long ago. We must see all of these as interlocking communications; comics leading to books, books leading into films and television and vice-versa. We must be understanding of our children's developing tastes, watchful of their needs and alert to use all of these media to serve their best interests. In other words, I think I am saying, don't turn off the TV set, just help the children learn to turn the dial.

What do we really know about the effects of television on children? Far too little, says this broadcaster — the important evidence is not yet in.

Television and children— a look at the research

By Irving Gitlin

A broadcaster has to be brave indeed these days to get up at a public forum: The hi-fidelity catcalls have made stronger men run for cover. I am speaking to you today as a broadcaster, but also as a parent. I neither want to defend, attack, nor counter-attack. The most useful service I can perform, it seems to me, in this important meeting, is to try to summarize what we in fact know—and perhaps, more interestingly, what we don't know—about the effect of the mass media, particularly the most watched of the mass media—television—on children. Dr. Frederick Wertham says: "Television creates a lust for violence in children." Professor Ithiel Pool, MIT social psychologist, says: "Violence on television may be good for children—seeing violence acted out in dramatic form which they understand may purge children of similar feelings." Senator Estes Kefauver says: "Television is making our nation's youth insensitive to human suffering." A group of educators and broadcasters, speaking for the Foundation for Character Education in Boston, says "Much of the television fare offered to children is of truly excellent quality; most of the early fears expressed about television's impact on children have been set to rest." Well, what is the truth of the matter? What do we know? What is TV's effect on children?

Some of the facts are easy to come by. We know quite a lot. There are today 51½ million TV sets in the United States; 33,700,000 sets in the rest of the world. Eighty-six percent of American families have a choice of 4 or more channels. Paul Witty, in the survey papers for this White House Conference, points out that school children in Chicago spend an average of 18½ hours per week watching TV. A recent study by the CBS Research Department, covering 27 million children, shows an average of 31½ hours per week of viewing by children between the ages of 4 and 11. The first fact is clear: There is a lot of television available to children, and they watch it a great deal. In fact, it is perfectly apparent that the child spends more time with the television set than he does in activities with the entire family, except for sleep. In terms of hours of contact, the television set has replaced both father and mother as the prime time-consumer.

So far, the facts have been easy to come by. Now, we get to the tough part of this survey. In the main, there is a scandalous

Mr. Gitlin's paper was originally presented to the 1960 White House Conference on Children and Youth this spring. It is reprinted here by permission of the author and of the 1960 Conference. Mr. Gitlin is Program Executive, Creative Projects, C.B.S. News.

paucity of good research on the impact of TV on children. Studies in this field fall into two categories: 1. the small research project which examines a tiny corner of the TV-child relationship: which are the most popular shows, how much time is consumed, the search for superficial attitude changes; 2. the poetic, intuitive study, often well written, which in the main tends to be critical of TV, but often is elegiac in its praise, based on no research, based on the subjective attitudes of the writer. Let's start with the research findings.

Himmelweit's findings

Perhaps the outstanding research study to date is that done in England by Hilde Himmelweit, and published by Oxford University Press in *Television and the Child*. It is interesting that we must go to England to find such a study—the most definitive study yet undertaken of the impact of television on the child. It is respected by scientists and broadcasters alike. Dr. Himmelweit is a psychologist at the London School of Economics. The study essentially compares children who are viewers of television with children who are non-viewers. This study falls into three main sections:

(A) *The Main Survey*. (May-July, 1955). In this survey Himmelweit studies 1,854 children in London, Portsmouth, Sunderland, and Bristol. Half of the children had television in their homes; half did not. The viewers and non-viewers were matched for age, sex, intelligence, and social class. They were given extensive questionnaires to fill out. Their answers provided data on their television habits and attitudes.

(B) *The Before and After Study*. (May-July, 1955). In 1955 there was no television in Norwich, England, but in 1956 a transmitter began broadcasting. Himmelweit had 2,200 school children in Norwich fill out questionnaires before and after television began. She wound up with a sample of 370 matched before and after viewers. Essentially, she compared children who had acquired TV with those who hadn't.

(C) *Miscellaneous Tests and Studies*. In

addition to the children's questionnaires, Himmelweit used a whole battery of research devices. These included depth interviews with children and mothers, group conferences with teachers, personal diaries, clinical psychology tests, etc.

1. Both age groups watched an average of 11-13 hours per week. (Stations not transmitting between 5:30 and 7:00 PM). The higher the IQ, the less time was spent in watching.

2. When asked for the program they liked best, 75% of the children's votes went to an adult show.

3. After the British commercial channel started operations, viewing of documentaries by children dropped from 48% to 13%.

4. *Values*. TV makes British children value self-confidence more; increases job aspiration, causes girls to worry about marriage (i.e., it will be unhappy), causes fewer stereotypes regarding foreigners.

5. *Fear*. Westerns don't frighten because they are remote, unreal, stylized, because the events are predictable, because there is no focus on the gory details. But murder thrillers do frighten (i.e., produce enuresis, nightmares, etc.). Such shows are real, unpredictable, do focus on gory detail. But viewers seem no more mal-adjusted than non-viewers.

6. *Knowledge and Information*. The gain is greatest among younger, duller children. Such children experience a gain in general knowledge equivalent to 4 to 5 months of normal growth from watching TV. Moreover, viewers hold their own with non-viewers in the classroom. Marks are generally the same.

7. Leisure Activities.

Movies: With younger children movie attendance drops off sharply, but it picks up with older children as it becomes a social activity with peers.

Radio: Non-viewers listen to radio 5 times as much as viewers. It doesn't disappear completely; for the majority, listening is about 1 hour per week. Only 1 in 3 children said they'd miss radio if it disappeared completely.

Reading: Comic book reading is hit hard permanently. Eg., among future viewers (i.e., those without sets who will later get them) 43% read 7 or more comics a week before TV, but only 26% did after TV. Book reading is cut by about 25% in the beginning, but it recovers after 3 years to where it was before TV.

8. *Passivity.* No evidence for an increase in passivity.

A crucial finding of Himmelweit is that the greatest impact of TV on children is made by *adult* programs. If you look at Paul Witty's list of favorite programs chosen by Chicago Elementary School students in 1959, you get: *The Three Stooges*, *Bugs Bunny*, *Rifleman*, *Shock Theatre*, and *Zorro*. Ninth Grade students chose: *Maverick*, *American Bandstand*, the *Dick Clark Show*, *Rifleman*, and *Father Knows Best*. Six of the ten shows chosen are adult-appeal shows.

Other studies

There are a number of other interesting studies of the effect of TV on children. Eleanor Maccoby, working with 379 kindergarten children in 1951-52, demonstrated that children who experience a frustrating authoritarian, non-permissive home atmosphere tend to watch TV more than children who do not, because they have a greater need for fantasy escape. Working with fifth and sixth grade children in Boston, she has also pointed out that children who are frustrated, remember aggressive content more than those who are not. Maccoby frustrated children before seeing a movie by giving them impossibly hard words to spell on a test. The controls were given easy words. The frustrated children remembered more of the aggressive content.

Riley and Riley, working at Rutgers using depth interviews with 400 children, point out that children who are not well integrated (accepted) in their peer groups show greater preference for horror and violence shows than children who are well

integrated in their peer groups. However, the peer-integrated children use the TV stories and themes in their play; they act them out. But the non-integrated children use them more in fantasy, they don't act them out.

What is the effect on learning? Himmelweit points to a noticeable gain in general information among viewers, the effect of educational television—and, in particular, in-school television may not be so strong. A comprehensive report by Presley D. Holmes, sums up the results of all major research and educational findings completed up to July, 1959. His report, based on 75 separate studies of the effectiveness of TV as a pedagogical tool, has a major finding: "The overwhelming majority of group comparison between TV and conventional communications show no substantial differences in achievement or information gain." This can be stated two different ways, depending on your point of view: Teaching by television is not better than teaching by the in-person method; or, teaching by television is as good as the in-person method; at least as far as the factual information tested is concerned.

In another comprehensive review of literature, "Television's Impact on Society" in the *American Psychologist* in 1955, Thomas Coffin finds: "... Children spent considerable time watching TV, but there is little evidence that TV has affected their *scholastic attainment*. Its effect on their use of other communications and entertainment media parallels the effect on their parents. Meals and bedtime suffer disarrangement, but interest in other recreational and social activities does not appear to have been seriously affected. The "passive" nature of TV viewing and the content of crime and violence in TV programs have been of concern to observers. However, attitudes of both parents and children toward TV are definitely favorable, and parents see many more advantages than disadvantages in it for their children..." There are a few more solid results of research: The Foundation for Character Education has

summarized them as follows in a report entitled *Television for Children*: TV has little or no effect on eyesight and health, achievement in school, reading of books and library usage. It has considerable effect on time spent watching TV (20-30 hours per week); keeping some children off streets, reducing the amount of sleep, reducing play with other children. It has unknown effects on character development, moral behavior, fears, aggression, behavior.

It is, of course, in this area of the unknown effects of TV on children that the greatest controversy and agitation exists. The intuitive, value-centered studies and statements are scathing (many of them), in their denunciation of the effect of TV on children. These attacks, of course, make the most interesting reading; they appeal

to our concern for the well-being of our children; they are upsetting. But the fact is that we just do not know whether they are right or wrong. And to find out, I would propose a major program of research. But, in the meantime, shall we sit back and just wait for the results of the research to come in? Certainly not, for no progress is made by waiting paralyzed until the last shred of information is in.

Quite apart from the ultimate effects of the media on children, we as parents and citizens are quite capable of deciding the values we stand for, the values we wish our children to follow. Television is America. It reflects our culture, and acts on it. What it reflects and how it acts, is properly a public matter; each of us as citizens has a profound responsibility for it.

Observations on the 1960 White House Conference

By Max Riske

The achievements of the vast gathering of people and ideas which culminated in the Golden Anniversary White House Conference on Children and Youth cannot yet be measured. Any final tallying lies with the 1970 White House Conference delegates, for in large measure, the answer will depend on one of the 1960 Conference's chief recommendations: the establishment of a permanent White House Conference Committee to inspire the implementation of its recommendations at state and local levels.

In the meantime, an observant participant from another country reports here his impressions of Americans-in-conference. Mr. Riske, Head of a New Zealand high school, is currently in the United States studying the mathematics project at the University of Illinois.

The White House Conference on Children and Youth, was, undoubtedly, the most exciting educational event of its kind I have known. Time may mellow some of my enthusiasm, as it may also blunt some of my bristling criticism. But, in the meantime, while the Conference is still fresh in my mind, here are some of the reasons I am at the same time, excited, elated, and

also cast down by what happened — and what hasn't happened, at least so far.

It was a gigantic undertaking, including 7,602 participants, of whom more than 500 were foreigners, representing a total of 73 countries. Over 1,000 of the participants were themselves young people between 18 and 22 years old. Sixteen hundred resolutions rose — and not always sluggishly — to the top voting forums, through a process of selection and discussion from the very heart of the Conference — the small Workgroups. In each Workgroup, (most were composed of about 30 or 40 people), everyone had a chance to speak and speak, and to formulate and argue for whatever resolutions he wished to see adopted by the large voting groups.

The physical organization — as I have learned to expect in the United States — was remarkably good. Only twice did the entire 7,000 of us meet as a group, first on opening night, and again at the general closing session five days later.

The Conference began on an unseasonably hot Sunday, when we convened in the Field House at the University of Maryland (about an hour's slow bus ride from downtown Washington). The Field House is an enormous stadium, a hall so vast that our entire group took up only the most central seats. Opening night was magnificent. Imagine this huge gymnasium with a stage decorated with flags and flowers, a public address system that worked all the time, a naval band playing, the trooping in of colors by a combined Armed Services Color Guard, a choir singing, fine — and short — speeches, and then, the President of the United States, appearing exactly on time.

Then we participants got to work. During the next four days, smaller groups of us met each morning shortly after nine at one of the five concurrent Theme Assemblies, whose speakers gave papers on various topics concerned with youth — their past, present and future in our changing world. Appraising ideals and values, assessing the impact of economic, social and cultural factors, adapting to the changes caused by science, technology and population increase — these made up the most general framework in which each of the discussions took place.

Later in the morning, the Assemblies "broke" into eighteen Forums, in which papers and discussions about narrower aspects of children and their world were presented. The Assembly and Forum speakers varied of course; some fell into a morass of generalities and pious platitudes, others were informative, intelligent, hard-hitting.

Dr. Ralph D. Rabinovich, for example, who presented a paper about the problems of adolescence (noting that this is "a normal growth period which is usually survived"), spoke most effectively about the general nature of adolescence, as well as identifying and calling for community action that should be taken to ensure the best development of teenage children.

By their nature — principally because they were so large — the Theme Assemblies and Forums seemed to me, on the

whole, to be limited to presenting, at best, wise generalities. But appropriate action, I felt, could not be advanced one whit, even by such well meant verbiage. Though these meetings were composed of a worthy and diverse group — teachers of every rank; doctors of mind and body; social workers in town and country; ministers of all faiths; housewives, colored and white, local and foreign — most of these people could not really make themselves felt in the large gatherings they attended.

The workgroups

The small Workgroups, however, enlivened by face-to-face argument, were better suited to taking action. Here, practicality could, and seemingly, often did, dominate.

The Workgroups — there were 210 of them, each related to one of the larger Forums — met during the afternoons. And they were appropriately titled, for here the real work for most of the participants took place. Here one learned what others were thinking and made one's own thoughts known. And, indeed, I soon found myself well at home, nodding hello, and comparing and criticizing the speakers. In the Workgroups, every one of us felt truly important and responsible for the success of the whole Conference. Some of our debates sounded as if we were actually legislating for future educational and social reform and that the nation would forthwith gratefully accept our opinions as policy.

"The purpose of the 1960 White House Conference is to promote opportunities for children and youth to realize their full potential for freedom and dignity." This was the Conference's rallying cry and presumably the criteria for all resolutions.

I soon found that Americans are quite responsive to such obviously worthy sentiments and tend to want to discuss them at length. However, I also found that my co-participants were not nearly as good at getting down to immediate practical suggestions that require urgent action. They are most effective in setting up discussions, less effective in following them through.

Recommendations

Nonetheless, most of our Workgroup members, as did many others I heard about, thought and debated hard and seriously, and, after our third session, the Forum with which our group and nine others were connected, met to vote on thirty-seven resolutions drafted by these groups. After overlapping and redundant resolutions had been consolidated, fewer than half that number remained to represent these Workgroups. And many of these resolutions surely called more for action than simply for asseverations of faith and hope. The full report of all the resolutions suggested and recommended from all the Forums has not yet been published but will be so shortly.

One hopes that among the published recommendations there will be many expressing some of the wishes as described by the Honorable Arthur S. Flemming, United States Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare, in his address at the closing general session of the Conference. In a terse, pointed statement, Mr. Flemming urged that there be further Federal financial aid for education, that nothing must stand in the way of complete integration of schools, that all agencies working with children must combine to strengthen the family, knowing that the family is the fundamental unit in American society and is primarily responsible for the welfare of its children.

A common purpose

My general impressions are kaleidoscopic and colorful. But from among the many separate, passing impressions, foremost in my mind is the feeling of common purpose I discovered with so many people from so many different lands. A threesome from Puerto Rico, knowing this country's language less well than I, but being more at home here than I, were curious to know what my country, New Zealand, might teach them. A woman, whose toes I stepped on in the bus, turned out to be a social worker from Stepney, England, who

told me of the vast improvement in life there since last I saw the East End slums in 1935. I met a public health doctor from Melbourne who likes the same heavy beer that I do, and with whom I compared notes about the Yanks. A Canadian social worker studying in New York taught me how to pronounce Canuck. A pretty little Jamaican told me of her studies at Wisconsin. And, dispiritedly, I also remember an American high school senior who said to me, "The Lord made three races and it is a sin to mix them socially."

Talk, enlightenment, a new perspective

So it went for nearly a week. Talk, questions, enlightenment about other people's troubles, and new perspective gained about my own country. I learned to appreciate the importance of full employment and social security as preludes to any decent opportunities for young people and their parents. I learned that words are precious but those pointed toward action against recognized evils are more to be desired than those that repeat past values with nostalgic overtones leading away from the future.

I learned that Americans may be better at passing resolutions than at taking actions. I learned that extreme localism in educational administration and financing can cripple an educational system and certainly stultifies progress, even though certain local systems may be very advanced. I learned that even such a diversified country as the United States, whose territory includes three million square miles, can develop quite similar educational practices over its length and breadth.

And, lastly, I learned that Washington, D. C., is a most beautiful city, almost Parisian, with its Hausmann planning, its old world houses, its buildings limited to 14 stories, its circles, squares, monuments, parks and bridges, its fine hotels and multiplicity of good eating places (one or two with German beer on draught, bless them), its advancing integration of the races, and its true spirit of internationalism.

EDITOR: Ada M. Daniels

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**PARENT
EDUCATION
EXCHANGE
BULLETIN**

REPORTS FROM ABOARD

Canada reports that among its contributions to Mental Health Year will be a study of parent education methods sponsored by the Canadian Mental Health Association, a Canadian family study by the Canadian Home and School and Parent-Teachers Federation and a Canadian Conference on Children. (Write: Canada's Mental Health, Department of National Health and Welfare, Ottawa, Canada.)

New French Center

A new Center for Human Sciences will be erected in Paris with the aid of a \$1 million grant from the Ford Foundation. The Center will group together institutes in anthropology, sociology, psychology, social mathematics, statistics, economics, geography, international relations. (For further information write France Actuelle, 221 Southern Building, Washington, D.C.)

SUMMER STUDIES

Group Work Institute

The University of Illinois School of Social Work's Third Institute on Group Work in Psychiatric and Medical Settings will be conducted August 7-12, 1960. The Institute will focus on the use of social work methods in hospital and clinic settings, and include material and discussion of group work with patients, family groups and relative groups. Dr. Gisella Konopka, Professor of Social Work, University of Minnesota, will lead the Institute. (For further information, write Director, Allerton House, U. of Illinois, 116 Illini Hall, Champagne, Ill.)

Family Life Study Tour

An eight-week family life study tour of Northern Europe and Russia will be conducted by Dr. and Mrs. M. G. Nimkoff during the summer of 1961. Dr. Nimkoff, professor, Department of Sociology at Florida State University is a past editor of Marriage and Family Living. Graduate credit will be available. (Write to Dr. Nimkoff, Department of Sociology, Florida State University, Tallahassee, Florida.)

RESEARCH REPORTS

A new method of evaluating the effect of participation in parent education courses is described by four staff members of the University of Toronto's Institute of Child Study in the July 1959 issue of Mental Hygiene. The authors report that the "Q-sort" technique, used to measure personality change after psychotherapy, may tap "more fundamental attitudes and attitude change" than the usual direct questionnaire method. They also suggest that their approach may eventually help in-

dicating the type of program which will best meet the needs of individual parents. (Send \$1.50 to Mental Hygiene, National Association for Mental Health, 10 Columbus Circle, New York 19, N.Y.)

"Parent Education and the Quality of Parenthood," a study of the source of information used by a selected sample of British parents is reported in THE PARENTS' ROLE IN THE CHILD'S DEVELOPMENT, proceedings Int'l Union for Child Welfare, 1 Rue de Varembe, Geneva, Swit.)

In A Critical Review of Some Recent Trends in Social Science Research Relevant to Parent Education, Dr. Lawrence LeShan points to some new directions in research which affect the parent educator:

1. The deepening understanding of the social pressures that our expanding society places on people, and the attempt to clarify questions of conformity and individualism.

2. An increasing awareness that the existence of value orientations in children depend on their existence in adults; that child rearing techniques, in themselves, will not create values. The attempt to perceive the effects on children of their parents' values.

3. A gradual realization that no one technique, no one method, no specific research tool, no one point of view, will solve all problems. Each has added to our knowledge, none can do the whole job.

Dr. LeShan's remarks were made at the 24th Annual New York State Conference of Parent Education Leaders at West Point in October 1956. (Fuller excerpts from the address may be ordered by sending 10¢ postage to the Education Department, Guidance Center of New Rochelle, 81 Centre Avenue, New Rochelle, New York.)

PROGRAM DEVELOPMENTS

In January 1960 Family Service Highlights, Mrs. Mae T. Mooney, Director of Family Life Education, Family Service Association of Greater Boston, reports on that Association's twelve-year family life education program. Although the Agency has concentrated on providing training leaders for group discussion series, it also provides speakers for single lecture meetings. Mrs. Mooney's article summarizes agency selection procedures, objectives, and methods of leadership. (For copies of the January 1960 Family Service Highlights send 20¢ to the Family Service Association of America, 215 Park Avenue South, New York 3, N.Y.)

Names Change

Two major mental health groups have announced changes in title, reflecting new program directions. The American Social Hygiene Association became The American Social Health Association and the Merrill Palmer School, The Merrill Palmer Institute of Human Development and Family Life.

NEW MATERIALS

Present practices and future goals of expectant parent education are discussed in Volume VII, No. 3 of The Bulletin For Maternal and Infant Health. In this issue, Aline B. Auerbach, Director, CSAA Department of Parent Group Education, and Ruth G. Taylor, Chief, Nursing Section, Division of Health Services, U.S. Children's Bureau, describe An Experiment in Training Nurses for Leadership of Expectant Parent Groups. Other articles include Development of Expectant Parent Classes in the United States, Hazel Corbin, R.N.; The Gray Zone in Obstetrics, Norman Miller, M.D.; Development Tasks of Expectant Families, Evelyn Millis Duvall; A State Cooperates in Expectant Parent Education, Goldie B. Corneliussen, M.D.; The Obstetrical Team Cooperates in Expectant Parent Classes, David B. Treat; Visual Aids and Bibliography for Expectant Parent Group Education, Jean Rebentisch, R.N. (Send 50¢ per copy to American Association for Maternal and Infant Health, Inc., 116 South Michigan Ave., Chicago 3, Ill.)

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CONCEPTS OF MENTAL HEALTH AND CONSULTATION: Their Application to Public Health Social Work, by Gerald Caplan with supplementary chapters by Virginia Insley, describes ways the social work consultant can help other members of the public health "team." Mental health aspects of the mother-child relationship are discussed in detail. (To order Children's Bureau publication No. 373, send \$1 to the Superintendent of Documents, Washington 25, D.C.)

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In the Magazines

The pros and cons of using personal material in parent discussion groups were discussed by Gertrude Goller Benton, lecturer at Western Reserve University, in the March 1960 issue of Parents' Magazine, 52 Vanderbilt Avenue, New York 17, N.Y. (Single copy 40¢.)

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Recordings

Two 12-inch L.P. recordings from the recent joint Woods Schools-University of Minnesota Conference, Counseling Parents of Children with Mental Handicaps, are now available for group use: 1) "Counseling with Parents at Time of First Knowledge of Retardation" by Reynold A. Jensen, M.D., Professor of Psychiatry and Pediatrics, University of Minnesota and 2) "Helping Parents in a Community Setting" by Harriet E. Blodgett, Assistant Professor, Institute of Child Welfare University, University of Minnesota. The disks may be rented without charge (except for shipping costs both ways) by writing to the Woods Schools, Langhorne, Penn. Three weeks advance notice necessary.

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CONFERENCE DATES, 1960

AUGUST 7-12
World Federation for Mental Health—

Edinburgh, Scotland

AUGUST 23-26

International Conference on the Family—Combined Annual Meeting of the National Council on Family Relations and the International Union of Family Organizations

New York City

Children's books—

Open doors to summer reading



Summer is a time for doing and for dreaming, and for asking important questions: Why is a seashell? How do you fly a kite? With the closing of school doors, other doors open. For knowledge and details that go beyond the classroom and the TV screen, today's youngsters are turning to a wealth of books published to speed them on their quest. The selections below, chosen for their summer appeal, suggest that a child who wishes to explore the mysteries of outer—or inner—space will find solid satisfaction in the world of books.

Books to begin on

- The Nicest Time of Year.* Written and illus. by Zhenya Gay. Viking. \$2. (5-7)
A Day of Summer. By Betty Miles. Illus. by Remy Charlip. Knopf. \$2.75. (under 5)
Going Barefoot. By Aileen Fisher. Illus. by Adrienne Adams. Crowell. \$3. (5-9)
Please Pass the Grass! By Leone Adelson. Illus. by Roger Duvoisin. David McKay. \$3. (5-7)
Timothy Robbins Climbs the Mountain. By Alvin Tresselt. Illus. by Roger Duvoisin. Lothrop, Lee & Shepard. \$2.75. (5-7)

For the very youngest, what better introduction to summertime pleasures than a read-aloud book describing them? The brief text and delicate illustrations of *The Nicest Time of Year* offer some charming surprises for the young listener. The bright sun itself seems to shine through the illustrations and poetic prose of *A Day of Summer*, while the warm colors and lighthearted verses of *Going Barefoot* create a mood of springtime anticipation and summertime delight. How does grass look to a cow in a pasture or a frog under a rain-drenched leaf? *Please Pass the Grass!* tells all, in gay and unusual pictures. And, for more adventurous moods, *Timothy Robbins Climbs the Mountain* conveys the deep sense of exhilaration that accompanies this fine activity.

For active hands

- Carpentry for Children.* By Jerome E. Leavitt. Illus. by Margrete Cunningham. Sterling. \$2.50. (9-12)
Model Boats for Beginners. Written and illus. by H. H. Gilmore. Harper. \$2.50. (10 up)
101 Best Nature Games and Projects. By Lillian and Godfrey Frankel. Sterling. \$2.50. (9-12)
Fun with Artificial Flowers. By Joseph Leeming. Illus. by Jessie Robinson. Lippincott \$3. (9 up)
How to Grow House Plants. By Millicent E. Selsam. Illus. by Kathleen Elgin. Morrow. \$2.50. (9-12)
Kites. Written and illus. by Larry Kettelkamp. Morrow. \$2.75. (all ages)
Mirror With a Memory: the Art of Photography. Written and photographed by Charles M. Dougherty. Harcourt, Brace. \$3.25. (11 up)
Camping and Outdoor Fun. By Major Mauno A. Lindholm, A.N.G. Illus. by Justin Pearson. Hart. \$1.50. (9 up)
The First Five Fathoms. By Arthur C. Clarke. Photographs by Mike Wilson. Harper. \$2.75. (10 up)
The First Book of Astronomy. By Vivian Grey. Illus. by George Geygan. Franklin Watts. \$1.95 (10-13)

Saws and hammers make the welkin ring, as well as the backyard or playroom. Proper handling of common tools is a first essential. Dad may want to help with some of the projects suggested in *Carpentry for Children*, but all are suited to beginners' skills. For a carpenter with a larger pile of shavings to attest to his experience, *Model Boats for Beginners* offers a wide range of plans, from simple to quite complicated. The clear diagrams in both these books will add to the pleasure of the young enthusiast. *101 Best Nature Games and*

Projects combines some simple scientific facts with an appeal to construction skills which may go along with an interest in nature and the outdoors. For older readers, *Fun With Artificial Flowers* provides detailed, accurate diagrams and patterns for flowers of paper, plastic, wood, shell and other materials. This is not a hobby for a passing interest, but the persevering child will be rewarded by its beautiful results. Also for indoor moods is *How to Grow House Plants*, a quietly informative and well arranged book, by a writer skilled in presenting nature subjects simply.

Moving outdoors, *Kites* introduces young readers (and their parents) to a fascinating hobby that is far more than a toy. The unusual range of photographs lifts *Mirror With a Memory* out of the ordinary run of how-to-take-a-good-picture books; the camera bug will be delighted by this well organized guide—but the chapters on film development should be saved until he is old enough to handle the chemicals required. *Camping and Outdoor Fun* contains so much excellent description of camping equipment and procedures that a dreaming child swinging in a hammock may get as much pleasure from it as the actual camper! A nice size too, to slip into a knapsack, or to tuck under a pillow at "lights out."

The First Five Fathoms brings the world's newest aquatic sport—skindiving—within reach of children over twelve. Jacques Yves Cousteau's introduction creates an imaginative concept of the space "downstairs" awaiting exploration. Excellent photographs and a sound, authoritative text describe the philosophy, equipment and safety rules of undersea swimming. After-dark adventurers will be delighted, too, by *The First Book of Astronomy*, a fine introductory guide to the quiet fun of stargazing.

For special interests

Timber! Farming Our Forests. Written and illus. by Walter Buehr. Morrow. \$2.75. (9-12)
State Trees. Written and illus. by Olive L. Earle. Morrow. \$2.50 (9-12)
Grasslands. By Delia Goetz. Illus. by Louis Darling. Morrow. \$2.75. (9-12)
The First Book of Water. By F. C. Smith. Illus. by Mildred Waltrip. Watts. \$1.95. (9-12)
Young Ranchers at Oak Valley. By Lucille M.

Nixon. Photographs by Martin Litton and Frances Coleberd. Lane. \$2.95. (9-12)

The Horse Through the Ages. Written and illus. by Cecil G. Trew. Roy. \$2.95. (12 up)

Youngsters in search of more detailed information on special subjects will be rewarded by the ever-growing scope of books available. *Timber!* explores the world of Paul Bunyan in an exciting treatment of lumber-jacking past and present. In *State Trees*, on the other hand, the accent is on identification, with excellent illustrations and interesting information about fifty representative trees. *Grasslands* calls attention to vital facts about prairies, savannas and steppes, the life on them and man-made changes.

The First Book of Water, another in a useful series for young readers, deals with the economic and physical problems of water and its uses—an excellent book to interest young people in conservation. Television fans will be delighted to find galloping horses and ten-gallon hats in *Young Ranchers at Oak Valley*, whose excellent photographs and text give a vivid picture of the daily life of our modern cowboy. No bad men are pursued, but a child will capture the feeling of living on a ranch as well as a warm love for animals and the open country. For avid horse lovers, *The Horse Through the Ages* offers detailed information in a complete history replete with accurate black and white drawings.

Wild life

Polar Bear Brothers. Photographs by Ylla. Story by Crosby Newell. Harper. \$2.75. (under 5)
The Bear Family. Written and illus. by George F. Mason. Morrow. \$2.75. (9-12)
Here Come the Raccoons! By Alice E. Goudy. Illus by Garry MacKenzie. Scribner's. \$2.50. (7-9)
Whitefoot Mouse. By Barbara and Russell Peterson. Illus. by Russell Peterson. Holiday House. \$2.50. (7-9)
Ground Birds. Written and illus. by Charles L. Ripper. Morrow. \$2.50. (8-12)
Bobwhite from Egg to Chick to Egg. By Elizabeth Schwartz and Charles Schwartz. Illus. by Charles Schwartz. Holiday House. \$2.50. (7-9)
A Butterfly Is Born. Written and photographed by J. P. Vanden Eeckhoudt. Sterling. \$2.50. (9-12)

A Bird Is Born. By E. Bosiger and J. M. Guilcher. Photographs by E. Hosking and R.-H. Noailles. Sterling. \$2.50. (9-12)

Wildlife In Danger. By Ivan Green. Photographs. Coward-McCann. \$3.50. (9-12)

Strange Partners. By Sigmund A. Lavine. Illus. by Gloria Stevens. Little, Brown. \$2.75. (9-12)

The Tale of A Meadow. Written and illus. by Henry B. Kane. Knopf. \$3. (8-12)

Wild Folk at the Seashore. Written and illus. by Carroll Lane Fenton. John Day. \$3.50. (9-12)

Wonders at Your Feet: A New World for Explorers. Written and illus. by Margaret Cosgrove. Dodd, Mead. \$2.95. (9-12)

Polar Bear Brothers, with its cool and beautiful photographs, will delight a child of any age with its amusing "family life" glimpses—very young children will love to hear the simple text, too. And, for more about this intriguing animal, *The Bear Family* presents all species in their habitats in many countries. Also fun to read aloud is *Here Come the Raccoons!* Here the pictures are most appealing, and the simple text, part fiction and part fact, makes a fine story. For the same age group, *Whitefoot Mouse* traces the life cycle of this woodland creature and its relationship to the natural world, even including a bit about how to keep a mouse as a pet.

Birds are the subject of two books with a somewhat unusual approach: *Ground Birds* presents a view of birds who live mostly on the ground; *Bobwhite from Egg to Chick to Egg* narrates the life cycle of the quail, with illustrations that are truly outstanding. So vivid are the camera closeups in *A Butterfly Is Born* and *A Bird Is Born*, that the reader does not feel the absence of color—even in the butterflies; the text in both books is delicately handled to interest all ages, adults included. We hope there are more to come in this unusual series. The camera again is used magnificently in *Wild Life In Danger*, which describes the tragic plight of animals already extinct, or nearly so, in a fine gallery of nature portraits.

Young naturalists will discover, in *Strange Partners*, how pairs of animals and interdependent plants cooperate for their mutual survival. Again, *The Tale of a Meadow* almost miraculously recreates the mood and atmosphere of the outdoors, without detracting from

the fine presentation of fact. *Wild Folk at the Seashore* will answer many questions raised by the inquisitive youngster. The black and white drawings not only effectively identify, but convey a feeling of the smooth roundness of, the shells and of the sticky wetness of sea weed. *Wonders at Your Feet* does much the same service for the woodland wanderer. Even the dirt underfoot becomes a new source of astonishment in this unusually informative book about tiny creatures and plants.

Science, science everywhere

A Young Scientist Takes a Walk: Guide to Outdoor Observations. By George Barr. Illus. by Jeanne Bendick. Whittlesey. \$3. (9-12)

Air All Around. By Tillie S. Pine and Joseph Levine. Illus. by Bernice Myers. Whittlesey \$2.50. (7-9)

Fun With Scientific Experiments. By Mae and Ira Freeman. Random. \$1.50. (9-12)

Science Experiments for Every Boy and Girl. By Louis K. Kleinman. Illus. by Justin Pearson. Hart Publishing. \$1. (9-12)

The How and Why Wonder Book of Dinosaurs. By Darlene Geis. Illus. by Kenyon Shannon.

The How and Why Wonder Book of Electricity. By Jerome J. Notkin and Sidney Gulkin. Illus. by Robert Patterson and Charles Bernard.

The How and Why Wonder Book of Rockets and Missiles. Written and illus. by Clayton Knight.

The How and Why Wonder Book of Rocks and Minerals. By Nelson W. Hyler. Illus. by Kenyon Shannon.

The How and Why Wonder Book of the Stars. By Norman Hoss. Illus. by James Ponter.

The How and Why Wonder Book of Weather. By George Bonsall. Illus. by George Pay. Wonder Books, 50c each. (9-12)

Two inviting books, *A Young Scientist Takes a Walk* and *Air All Around*, spark youngsters to find out more about their everyday surroundings. Children will revel in the discovery that they can understand basic scientific principles, and the amusing illustrations will add to their satisfaction with the easily performed experiments. Again, *Fun with Scientific Experiments* offers material for a wide age range, with its simple text and clear photographs. *Science Ex-*

periments *For Every Boy and Girl* uses ordinary household equipment to illustrate simple experiments—a handy paper volume which fits neatly into a back pocket.

Inexpensive books are especially welcome not only for their information, but for their availability. The *How and Why Wonder Book* series offers six new informative paperbacks within almost anyone's budget. Profusely illustrated in color, each of the volumes is attractive and useful.

But I'll feed him myself!

The ABC of Dog Care for Young Owners. Written and illus. by Charlotte Baker. David McKay. \$2.75 (9-12)

The Golden Book of Wild Animal Pets. Written and photographed by Roy Pinney. Golden Press \$1.95 (7-11)

Small Pets from Woods and Fields. Written and illus. by Margaret Waring Buck. Abingdon. \$3. (9-12)

No summer is complete without the yearning for a pet or the discovery of the many opening vistas in fields and woods. *The ABC of Dog Care For Young Owners* presents its information in a spritely fashion with good advice about how to live with Fido. The large, colorful photographs make *The Golden Book of Wild Animal Pets* an attractive and practical guide for catching and caring for many different kinds of field and woodland creatures. For a more ambitious nature student, *Small Pets from Woods and Fields* provides detailed information about many small creatures, along with illustrations and directions for collecting, housing and caring for them.

Fact and fiction

A Fox Named Rufus. By Elizabeth Ladd. Illus. by E. Harper Johnson. \$2.75 (9-12)

That Rascal, Fridolin. By Hans Fallada. Illus. by Imre Hofbauer. Pantheon. \$2.95 (9-12)

This is Nature. Thirty Years of the Best from Nature Magazine. Selected and edited by Richard W. Westwood. Illus. by Walter W. Ferguson. Crowell. \$5.95. (12 up)

Youngsters will weep sympathetically as Mary must decide whether to keep *A Fox Named Rufus*, a creature of the forest who cannot survive as a chained pet. *That Rascal, Fridolin*, the beautifully written story of a badger,

conveys with wit and humor, the author's fine feeling for animals—an unusual and outstanding book. Older readers will welcome a compilation of favorite articles and stories from *Nature Magazine*—a well chosen collection of essays and fiction about varied aspects of the natural world, each endowed with great love.

By BARBARA BREGMAN
and LOUISE SCHLOSS

for the Children's Book Committee

Book Reviews

Anxiety in Elementary School Children

By Seymour B. Sarason, Kenneth S. Davidson, Frederick F. Lighthall, Richard R. Waite, Britton K. Ruebauch
New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1960. \$7.95

"Johnny is not working up to potential," a teacher or a parent may say—and then wonder why. What keeps him from using his talents to the full? What roles do his personality, his relationships to people play? In a world so dependent on creative thought, we must learn all we can about factors that affect productivity.

Anxiety in Elementary School Children is an important new, although highly technical, study of the way one factor—*anxiety*—affects the performance of elementary school children. Although the authors focus on children's anxiety about school tests, their report has broader scope, for they believe that any situation in which an authority figure passes judgment on a child's adequacy is to him a "test" situation. They suggest that the roots of test anxiety may lie in the ways parents judge the preschool child's achievements and solutions to problems, in the standards they set for him and the demands they make on him.

They indicate that anxiety about academic performance is not highly correlated with parental stress on intellectual achievement, nor with a family's status. In addition, they suggest criteria for early identification of anxious children and outline ways to help such youngsters in the classroom.

What is an anxious child? The authors believe that although all children are concerned with what others think of them, the highly anxious child requires an excessive amount of approval, which inhibits his spontaneity and

creativity. As his anxiety becomes more acute, the child becomes convinced of his own inadequacies and is less able to cope with everyday problems.

Extreme anxiety is not relieved by a confident, "I know you can do it," or "You have nothing to worry about." These reassurances may tend to make a child more anxious, for they throw him back on his own resources, which he feels are inadequate. He is sure that he cannot handle the situation as well as others can, as well as he would like, or as well as he thinks others expect. Such anxiety is impervious to reason, logic or a hearty slap on the back.

Anxiety in Elementary School Children is based on a complex six-year study of 160 youngsters, drawn from a population of 1,130 children in grades one through four in six schools in Milford, Connecticut and in state-supported schools in the Borough of Herndon, England. Group tests and individual performance tests were administered; parents were interviewed about their relationship with and attitudes toward their children.

The investigators developed two group test questionnaires: The Test Anxiety Scale for Children and The General Anxiety Scale for Children. The TASC contained such questions as: "Do you worry when teacher says she is going to ask you questions?" or "Do you wish a lot of times that you didn't worry about tests?" The General ASC included such questions as: "When you are away from home, do you worry about what might be happening at home?"

The results suggest that the higher a child's anxiety, the lower his I.Q. and achievement test scores. A strong positive relationship between the TASC and the GASC emerged, pointing to the fact that the test anxious child is a generally anxious child as well.

Three individual tests—the Rorschach, Human Figure Drawing and Experimental Learning Study—supported the evidence that a highly anxious child scored lower on achievement tests than did a less anxious child with the same I.Q. Although anxiety interfered with girls' achievement, it interfered more with boys'. The authors believe that girls may find it easier to admit anxiety and so are better able to focus on the test itself, rather than on their own reactions. Repeated test experiences did not reduce test anxiety.

The anxious child sometimes did better than less anxious children on certain kinds of tests—when he knew what kind of response was expected from him, when he was encouraged to ask questions of the examiner, when the atmosphere was relaxed, and when a more cautious approach to the test material was rewarded. The findings also suggest that the teacher's response to a poor performance affects the future performance of a highly anxious child, and may reinforce the child's feeling that failure and being personally liked are related.

Interviews with parents showed that mothers of highly anxious children were more defensive about their relations with their child than mothers of less anxious children, and strongly felt that children should be encouraged to talk about their problems with their parents. The authors point out that the child may well want to avoid talking about his school worries:

"If the child feels compelled not to keep secrets from mother and father, this can create the dilemma of his feeling guilty about not revealing a failure, but at the same time experiencing anxiety about the loss of parental regard if they are told the secret. . . . help with every problem—or even every difficult problem—could lead to the child's feeling anxious about his adequacy in solving them himself."

The research on which this report is based is part of a continuing study, supported by various grants from the National Institute of Public Health and the United States Public Health Service. Clearly it offers many new and important leads for further investigation of the influence of the teacher on the young child as well as for a re-evaluation of the nature and aims of school testing programs.

Unfortunately, however, the volume is not for the general reader, although its conclusions are of wide interest. Much of it necessarily deals with technical research problems and the writing is at times needlessly complex, and even unclear. It would have been helpful to have an opening summary. Despite these inadequacies, *Anxiety in Elementary School Children* is an important book, especially for research workers, psychologists, teachers and other professionals who work with children.

MRS. RUTH FEDER
for the Book Review Committee

Counselling the Catholic

By George Hagmaier, C.S.P. and Robert W. Gleason, S.J.

New York: Sheed and Ward, 1959. \$4.50

Two Catholic priests have written this wise, humane introduction to counseling. It is recommended as reading for counselors of all faiths. The authors—knowing the pitfalls of hasty judgment, quick diagnosis and rule of thumb prescription—urge counselors, whether priests or laymen, to hold back, do much listening and always keep in mind that the roots of behavior are deep and complex. An extra bonus is the readable style, mercifully free of the jargon and muddiness which mar much writing in this field.

In Part I, Father Hagmaier of the Institute of Religious Research, New York, reviews the basic concepts and techniques of pastoral counseling. In Part II, Father Gleason of the Department of Theology, Fordham University, discusses in more detail "those aspects of specific counseling challenges which touch the province of the moral theologian." A scholarly bibliography and two appendices, one describing the chief mental illnesses, the second listing referral sources, complete the volume.

Significantly, although both authors reject Freud's metaphysics, they do him full honor as a great psychologist. His discovery of the importance of unconscious drives, they believe, has posed some knotty moral problems; but also has given the world a view of human behavior which must be understood in depth by all who would attempt to modify it. Here, then, is a lucid, accurate and almost wholly accepting introductory account of the Freudian view of mental mechanisms. It is refreshing to find the difference between real guilt and neurotic guilt so fully understood. This important distinction has escaped many.

The non-Catholic reader, of course, will regret much—the view that masturbation is "objectively" (though significantly, not always) a "grave sin," the ban on "artificial" contraception. Certain phrases too—"holiness," "grace," "original sin"—are likely to ring strangely to the ear of many moderns. Yet the approach, as a whole, is wonderfully free of moral cant and, such is the author's skill that even these terms take on a contemporary meaning. After all, "original sin" has much in common with the Freudian "id."

Each of the authors devotes a chapter to masturbation, homosexuality and alcoholism, three problems often encountered by the priest both in the confessional and in less formal counseling.

I quote from the chapters on masturbation since their approach here is typical of the whole and, perhaps, closest to parents' concerns:

"The young person should be helped to see that the sex instinct is an integral and very important part of human nature. He should be encouraged to look on this basic instinct with pride.

Also:

"Infantile masturbation in no way involves responsible guilt or sin. The discovery of pleasurable sensations in the genital area must be considered as part of the normal growth process . . . parents should be encouraged to ignore the masturbatory practices of their young children."

Throughout the volume, there are sound words of caution on the too-hasty judgment, the facile solution—and a note on prayer:

"One wonders how often a confessor's harshness or ineptitude has led a discouraged young man to abandon his relationship to the Church. On the other hand, it is not uncommon to meet an adult who confides, 'Thank God for old Father Smith who helped me over a rough four or five years by hearing my unchanging weekly or monthly confessions with a minimum of praise or blame, merely granting a merciful absolution with the cheery words, 'keep doing your best.'"

"In a great many cases, too, it is unwise to suggest prayer at the extreme point of crisis as an effective deterrent . . . Tense and frantic pleas to Almighty God and the saints for courage and protection at times when temptation has already overpowered the will, create more emotional upheaval.

Of special interest to this non-Catholic reviewer, aware of the Church's emphasis on freedom of the will, is the authors' view that the victim of any extreme obsessive form of undesirable behavior is really not "free" theologically any more than he is psychologically. The counselor, for example, is specifically warned not to try to help the deeply conditioned homosexual to "change" lest he precipitate a psychosis. Psychiatric treatment is then strongly recommended in the belief that mental illness left untreated is an insuperable roadblock to religious grace. Along with this, however, the authors suggest that a constant cry of mental "illness" may provide a too ready "out" for personal effort.

Enlightening, too, is the chapter, "Scrupulosity," meaning a fussy priggishness or even a morbid sense of guilt in the face of which neither reassurances from the priest that the penitent has *not* committed a sin nor even absolution itself have any powers to console. This type of penitent is now seen by many Catholic writers as a pathological person in need of treatment.

There seemed to be some begging off from the touchy question of birth control and the moral and theological grounds on which the Church rests its case; the reader is referred in a footnote to a fuller discussion elsewhere. The authors' sympathy with young couples yearning for each other at a time when sexual abstinence has been enjoined (the "rhythm" method of contraception which the Church permits) is so evident that one wonders whether the authors themselves may not be puzzled by this extra trial for the Church's already overburdened children.

One may hope that from these same pens we may one day have a book on counseling which is concerned with somewhat less portentous matters than here treated—the mother distressed because her child tells lies, or hates the baby or defies her discipline, or who herself cannot get along with her mother-in-law. This common garden variety of family problem would surely get the same perceptive treatment in full awareness of the complex forces underlying even the simple daily trials that plague us all.

ANNA W. M. WOLF

CSAA reports

New training program

A new three-year program to train public health and maternity nurses in leadership of expectant parent groups was launched by CSAA's parent group education department this spring. The project is part of the Association's long range program for developing group leadership skills among the key professions working with parents or expectant parents. The new project is the first to be offered in New York for nurses from many states throughout the country and is made possible by a special grant to the New York State Health Department from the Children's Bureau of the U.S. Department of Health Education and Welfare.

Board members elected

Three new members were elected to the Association's Board of Directors this spring; Mr. Edward T. Chase, Vice-president of Cunningham and Walsh, advertisers, Mrs. Robert W. Comfort of Hartsdale, New York, and Mrs. Leonard Marx of Scarsdale, New York.

Conference paper

An abridged edition of *Trends and Techniques in Education: A Critical Review*, a paper prepared for the Association's staff by Aline B. Auerbach, director of CSAA's parent group education department, appeared in the volume, *Reference Papers* of the 1960 White House Conference on Children and Youth. A full-length version of the paper will be available from CSAA in July.

CSAA Book Awards

The Child Study Association of America presented its first Annual Award for an outstanding book for parents to *The Magic Years* by Selma H. Fraiberg, published by Charles Scribner's Sons, at its Annual Conference Luncheon in New York this spring.

Mrs. Edward First, Chairman of the Book Review Committee, announced that the new award was established "to encourage the publication of sound, helpful well written books which contribute to a better understanding of children and family life."

The Association's Annual Children's Book Award, established in 1942, this year went to *Jennifer* by Zoa Sherburne, published by William Morrow. The award is presented for a "book for young people which deals realistically with problems in their contemporary world."

Mrs. F. S. Straus, Chairman of the Children's Book Committee, said of *Jennifer*: "It is a fine story of a young girl who conquers her shame and fears as she grows to understand her mother's valiant struggle against alcoholism. The hard-won triumph of mother, father and daughter shines through this moving book." Honorable mention went to Dorothy Sterling for *Mary Jane* published by Doubleday, the story of a young Negro's experiences in a newly integrated Southern school.



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WHEN A PARENT IS MENTALLY ILL

What to Say to Your Child

By Helene S. Arnstein

This recently published pamphlet is intended for the parent or family member who is caring for children while one of the parents is mentally ill. It gives specific illustrations of *what to do* and *what to say* to children of all ages—pre-school, pre-adolescent and adolescent. When the problems of fathers are different from those of mothers, the difference is recognized and the problems are treated separately.

The hospitalization of a mentally ill parent may mean a succession of distressing experiences for the child, any one of which would be disturbing. By reading this pamphlet, the other parent can find ways of helping children through this painful time.

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